The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

John E. Simpson:

CHRIST AND OUR GIVING

Page **2**

Liston Pope **4** Jesus Took a Towel

George McNeill Ray **6** The Resurrection Truth

S. MacLean Gilmour **7** Son of the Living God

Charles P. Bowles **10** Tradition of the Fathers

Harry Milton Taylor **13** Dangers of Socialism

For Other Features **31** Table of Contents

AARON N. MECKEL **19** WINNING SOULS

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By John E. Simpson

PREACHING AND

"WHEN I entered the ministry I made a solemn vow never to mention money from the pulpit or to discuss it with my officials." So says one minister. Again, a printed sermon has this introduction: "So important have I deemed this subject that I have made it a practice to preach a sermon each year on giving in connection with the raising of the annual budget." At the other extreme there are the religious racketeers who infest our cities and the ether waves to extract the last nickel from an unsuspecting and gullible public.

Christ Taught Stewardship

Between these extremes we have the method used by Christ. So far as we can find, he had no one to read heart-rending letters or to promote the "love offering." In fact, we search in vain for evidence of his ever receiving an offering at all. The nearest to one is when he sent Peter to the sea at Capernaum to "find a shekel . . . to pay the tax." The only church bazaar he ever attended, he wrecked.

But he did preach and teach stewardship. Twenty of his twenty-six major parables contain a definite stewardship message, though often secondary to greater teaching. For instance, there is the parable of the rich man who thought that he could selfishly keep all the fruits of his fields. God said of him, "Thou fool." A professor in one of our seminaries used to say, "If you have a miser and a drunkard in your congregation, be more concerned about the miser than the drunkard. Both are great sins. But drunkenness is a sin of the flesh, while miserliness is a sin of the heart."

Jesus also told of another rich man who let a worthy beggar die at his gate and received eternal punishment for the sin of selfish inhumanity. What a background for a sermon on "Helping the Worthy Poor"! On the other hand, Jesus gave a great sermonette on a lone fig tree in a vineyard. For years it had cumbered the ground, all the time drinking in the sunshine and rain that might have fallen on the vines beneath it. It was there to bear figs, but it hadn't done so. It was given but one more year to render a return or to be cut down and burned. The message: if the owner of a single fig tree has a right to expect a return from it, God has a right to expect a return from the least recipient of his love and care. Moreover, Jesus commended the "poor widow' who gave her all and trusted God to supply her need on the morrow.

Witness some of his great parable-sermons on stewardship. There is "The Tragedy of Delay" in which the foolish virgins illustrate the fact that now is the only time we have to invest that with which we would honor Christ. Then there is the story that, while it portrays the forgiving spirit of a loving father, tells of a home which miserably failed in the field of stewardship. A young lad is given his inheritance in cash and started down the road to ruin by an overindulgent father. That son became a wastrel. The elder son was miserly and vindictive about his share of the inheritance. How many homes today fall into the same pattern on money matters? Overindulgence is too often a sin of both rich and poor.

'Do Thou Likewise'

Another great message on stewardship is found in the parable of the unemployed in the market place. Here is a businessman who had concern for his labor pool and their families. He not only put the idle to work but saw to it that at the end of the day they did not go home to their families empty-handed. Yet he was criticized by some as being unfair to labor.

Perhaps Christ's greatest sermon on stewardship is the one that deals with sharing with those in distress. In it are four kinds of people: The thieves who live by preying on others; their victims who still line our Jericho roads and Skid Rows; the indifferent to human need who, like the priest and the Levite, do not care; and, in contrast, the one who cares enough really to do something about it. Here was a real "neighbor" who shared his first-aid equipment, provisions, conveyance, lodging place, money and credit.

Paul's writings are a gold mine for stewardship preaching material. For instance, there is the god that will not be outdone and who "will supply and multiply your resources." It is God

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CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

who deserves our thanks for "his inexpressible gift" (II Cor. 9:6-11). There is that great statement in II Cor. 8:8-14, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich." This is followed by one of the choicest of stewardship texts in the Bible: "I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened, but *as a matter of equality,* your abundance at the present time may supply their want."

Romance and Stewardship

Nor does stewardship preaching need to be dry. Romance provides two unique texts in the Old Testament. When Abraham's servant came to court the young Rebekah for Isaac, her brother Laban seems to have been more interested in material things than in the future happiness of his sister. One of the choicest bits of humor in scripture declares: "And when he saw the ring and the bracelets upon his sister's hands . . . he went to the servant and said, Come in, thou blessed of the Lord." Laban himself had a daughter whom a young man by the name of Jacob met one day at the well with her father's flocks. Both seem to have attracted his attention, for we read: "And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel . . . and the sheep of Laban . . . Jacob kissed Rachel." How romantic indeed! And yet, how tragic is the place of greed and crass materialism in the relationships of life, in religion, in politics, even in romance. How many young lives have been crucified on a cross of gold because of the lust for material things by some parent or ruler.

Salvaging Estates

Then there is David's will which, it is said, would stand probate in any court. In it the aged king tells of his great love for the house of God and his enormous preparation in the gathering of materials with which to build the temple. He then records his personal possessions which are now set aside for this work—"a treasure of mine own of gold and silver," estimated by some as the equivalent of twenty billion dollars today—and says, "I give it unto the house of my God." To this staggering gift is added a challenge to the royal court as the will would be read: "Who then of you offereth willingly to fill his hand this day unto God?" Do we give according to the hand of a king? Here is a text that will help to salvage for Kingdom work some of the vast estates that are being left to prodigal relatives or to horses or dogs. Remember the $40,000 recently left to a Boston cat.

The value of stewardship preaching is seen in a story which comes to us from what is known as the highest parish in the world. The Ethiopian war was a heavy draining on finances in Italy. The Waldensian Church (Protestant) of Prali was unable to pay its minister and was about to close. It was then that the Rev. Guido Comba (who is now dean of the Waldensian Theological Seminary and representative of the World Council of Churches' reconstruction department) made a financial survey of its membership. He found that they were paying more to feed their birds, cats and dogs than it would take to keep the church going. He determined to preach stewardship for a whole year. The church started to thrive, paid its bills and began to help the mission churches that were in financial straits. At the end of the year, the congregational reports showed a gain in giving of 400 per cent. By a unanimous vote the congregation asked for another year of stewardship messages. The increase in giving the second year was 200 per cent. This was an increase of 800 per cent in two years, and a church and several missions were saved from closing.

The Will to Share

One great fact, evidenced by letters received and conferences held in recent years, is that the American church is hungry for stewardship preaching and will respond to it. The church carries a great financial load today. An estimated billion souls are still in spiritual darkness, myriads cannot read the Word of God, millions are in need of medical care. Adequately to equip and send out missionaries is expensive as never before. The financial strain on the home churches is heavy indeed. Yet Christians have the means to meet this need. The great lack is the will to share in the program of sharing. In an hour when the church is "burdened with the honor and honored with the burden" of the destiny of humanity, the grace of sharing must be held before our people by the preaching of Christian stewardship.

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Jesus Took a Towel

A Sermon for Holy Week

By Liston Pope

Jesus . . . rose from supper, laid aside his garments, and girded himself with a towel. John 13:4.

AFTER the last supper with his disciples, Jesus rose from the table, laid aside his garments, and took a towel. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet.

This simple story, by modern taste uncouth, seems out of place among the great events of the week before Jesus was crucified. Only one of the Gospel writers tells of the incident; perhaps the others did not deem it worthy of narration. One wonders why even one of them should have taken time, in the midst of describing the triumphant entry into Jerusalem, the high communion of the last supper, the agony of Gethsemane and the trial and crucifixion—one wonders why even one of the Gospel writers considered it important to relate that Jesus performed the simple task of washing his disciples' feet.

A King?

This incident has been a favorite theme of Christian preachers through the centuries, and many interpretations of it have been offered. Luke reports that a dispute had arisen among the disciples at the supper as to "which of them should be accounted the greatest." Only a few days before, as he entered triumphantly into Jerusalem to the plaudits of the mtulitude, it had looked as though Jesus would take a crown. The notion had arisen, and apparently was held by some of the disciples, that Jesus would be a temporal king over Judea; his disciples were therefore jockeying for positions in his court. Edersheim has conjectured that the dispute at the supper took place over the order of seating at the table, which would have been indicative of comparative status and rank. The seat of honor, according to Jewish custom, would have been at the left of Jesus. Judas had challenged Peter's right to that seat; when Jesus rebuked them for quarreling, Peter went to the foot of the table.

Apparently no servant was present after dinner to perform the menial chore, customary among the Jews, of washing the feet of those assembled. Jesus, as host, was faced with the obligation of providing this service. But on whom should he call? Each disciple was guarding jealously his own prestige; each was loath to stoop to the others, to lose status by performing a servant's task. And so Jesus, their Master, rose and took a towel.

Many lessons have been drawn from this story. It has been said that Jesus was here teaching his disciples personal humility, or self-forgetfulness, or a new standard of greatness. It has been said that he was teaching forgiveness: if Judas had the seat of honor, it is likely that Jesus waited first on him—not to make him ashamed or to deter him from his plan of betrayal, but to reveal to the traitor the forgiveness and love of his Master.

Again, the purpose of Jesus has been interpreted as that of building group solidarity: by his dramatic act of service, he sought to bind his followers irrevocably together, against that near day when he himself would no longer be their center. "If I then have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet."

Social Identification

Another possible interpretation has been relatively slighted. In taking the towel, Jesus demonstrated that he was willing to renounce his own special privileges and to identify himself with the most lowly status. If any person present had the right to expect personal attention it was Jesus. He was the acknowledged Master of the group; his place as head was uncontested. He was the last person from whom his followers would expect personal service or to whom they would ascribe inferior place. Peter protested on seeing his Master in this role. Any of the disciples, except Judas, would have counted it an honor to perform for Jesus the service they were not willing to perform for each other.

Yet Jesus rose, renounced his privilege, and assumed the role of a servant. Having refused a crown, moving toward a cross, he took a towel.

This was not the first time Jesus had refused to press for privileges or to rely on rank and power among men. He had come, the Son of God, to be born into a simple home in a small and subject nation. His parents were so obscure that but for him they would have been long since forgotten, so lowly in influence that they could procure in

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Bethlehem, in a time of grave crisis, no lodging better than a stable.

Jesus had no special advantages in his upbringing, as the world measures such things. He was not educated in Athens or Rome; he was not the privileged son of a wealthy trader or a Roman senator or a Jewish rabbi. He followed the hard routine of a carpenter shop. His more privileged contemporaries had no illusions about his social position; he was referred to scornfully as the carpenter of Nazareth, a simple artisan from a village out of which nothing good could come.

The Carpenter of Nazareth

Even after the great commission at his baptism, even after he clearly knew the unparalleled role for which he had been chosen, Jesus refused to use his new power for personal advantage. Offered the kingdoms of the world in exchange for his soul, he declined. After he had attracted a group of followers and appeared to be on the highroad to an important public career, he still refused to accept special prerogatives: he would not allow himself to be shielded from eager children or from the ill and tormented persons who made nuisances of themselves seeking his help. He would not encourage a movement to make him a king, even after the stirring events of Palm Sunday had established for him a popular following. In the face of crucifixion, he would not allow his followers to arm themselves for his defense.

And now at the Last Supper, as he comes to the end of the way and stands already in the shadow of the cross, he remains a lowly servant and takes a towel.

That towel might conceivably have become the symbol of Christianity, instead of the cross. To be sure, a cross is more dramatic; it brings recollection of a man unafraid silhouetted against the sky; it represents sacrifice of life instead of mere sacrifice of social status. By the same token, the meaning of the cross is fairly remote from our workaday lives; most often we take it seriously only on Good Friday. True enough, we appropriate the cross to all sorts of petty privations and personal suffering; we speak petulantly or with resignation of "bearing our cross"; but such claims are generally a travesty or sacrilege. Few men in a generation really are led to Calvary. The cross condemns us from afar; remote, it eludes even an aspiration to it.

A Towel and a Cross

On the way to the cross there was the towel. A towel belongs to the prosaic workaday world; it is of the very essence of familiarity; we see it every day in the intimate context of kitchen and bath. But it once was used as the high and holy token of the renunciation of special privileges and of self-seeking, as was a cross. The commonplace towel foreshadowed the unmatchable cross.

As the cross represents the ultimate requirement of the Christian life, so the towel represents its immediate demand. Few of us will be called on to pay the penalty of death for the sake of our faith; each of us is called on, again and again, to forsake comfort and privilege in order that the fellowship and love desired by Jesus for his followers may be exemplified. We are called to remember that his fellowship is broken so long as men quarrel over personal rights and fight for special consideration, leaving some weary and uncared-for while others care only for themselves.

We live in a world similar in motives to those of the disciples at the Last Supper. Individuals struggle for the privileges that come with wealth and power. Our civilization measures success in terms of rank and the service one can command. Our quest for power works itself out into tragedy on every hand. Bitter extremes of wealth and poverty turn men to cynicism and despair, and many to false messiahs, in a world in which there could be enough for all if the welfare of all were the primary consideration.

While some manipulate industry and trade and public utilities and education and religion to their own advantage, one-third of our families in rich America receive less than a health-and-decency income, less than an adequate education, and less than a Christian exemplification of mutual concern and love. Even the simplest rights of self-direction of wage workers in terms of collective organization are often misrepresented and contested by those who fear that labor might "get out of control" and menace their existing privileges. We denounced, and rightly, the pretensions of the nazis to be a master class, but we often proceed on the assumption that maintenance of special rank here at home is compatible with Christian ethics. Even religion becomes a reflection and sanction of our class structure, and churches come to be known as symbols of social division. How easily we worship before the cross, but despise and repudiate the humble towel.

The Needs of the World

Sometimes it seems as difficult to take up the towel as it would be to bear the cross. But in his account of the Last Supper, John tells us also the source and the secret of Jesus' self-renunciation. He says that Jesus, "knowing that he was come from God and went to God . . . took a towel." It was not personal humility or the desire to teach a lesson or to accomplish group cohesion that prompted his act. Rather, it was a recognition of his role under God, and a result of complete trust and confidence in God. Trusting in the very highest, he could become as one of the very lowliest.

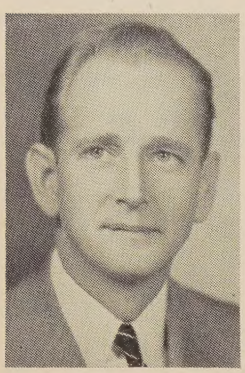
I wonder what became of the towel Jesus used. One could speculate ildly: perhaps Pilate used it after washing his hands, or Simon of Cyrene after carrying the cross. Like the Holy Grail and the robe for which the soldiers gambled, it is lost in antiquity. But is it lost? When all about him were torn apart by self-concern and jealousy of privilege, Jesus took a towel. A towel for tending the needs of the world is placed in the hands of those who follow him. It is ours to use or to cast away.

The Resurrection Truth

By George McNeill Ray

I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? John 11:25-26.

DEATH would seem to be the final word in life. In spite of scientific formulas giving length to our years, death comes at the end of day and appears to have the last word. We are like the grass that grows up and one day fades away. Death comes to swallow up life and to claim it as its helpless victim. Then what? Shall death have dominion over life? Is death the last conquering experience in life? Is the resurrection a reality?



Jesus would reply simply, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me shall never die . . . Believest thou this?" Note that Jesus projects no form of debate nor argument in this. The New Testament possesses not the slightest argumentative approach to it. Jesus simply proclaims the Easter fact. Throughout past generations, men in their Christian creeds boldly affirmed that "the third day he arose . . . I believe in the life everlasting."

The fact of the resurrection held a place of significance in the New Testament era of preaching. The gospels are literally overflowing with its import. The apostles proclaimed its truth. The church testified to its validity. St. Paul taught its full meaning, for he was a witness to the risen Christ. Others, to whom Jesus appeared after his resurrection, joyously spread the story around the countryside. But to proclaim this truth and to tell its story is not enough. One must know and experience the power of the resurrection within his own entombed life. As Jesus burst forth from the three-day tomb, so also must he come forth with full release from the confined area within the heart of man.

Christ—Victor over Death

Humanists attempt to escape the problem and reality of death. They have little to offer or say on the subject. Yet Christianity stands boldly before death to recognize its reality and at the same time to proclaim the fact that Christ not only lived and experienced death, but arose the victor over death. And "because I live, you too shall live." The church, then, marches bravely to the tomb of death, honest and unafraid. Any religion that does not possess, and is not possessed by, this faith and integrity damns itself through its own stupidity and closed mind. Plato once said: "The presence of death sets men to thinking."

The materialistic mind would say: "The concert is over. Everything will go." Such a philosophy leaves its frail touch, like the winter's dry leaves heaped high, at the dead-end street of intellectual frustration. Consider the Hindu and the Buddhist: "All form will return to the formless." Individual identity is forever lost, and is likened to snowmen fast melting away with the coming of spring's tender sun, or to bubbles that float for a brief time in air, then burst and are gone forever.

Christianity is concerned more with life than with immortality. St. Paul employs the word "immortality" only twice. When he stated that "we must put on immortality" he simply meant that the soul was not immortal of itself, but must become the recipient of immortality. Therefore the great Christian word is "life," and not "soul." The Christian thought is *victory,* while the Platonic idea is *escape.* While immortality suggests an immunity to death, resurrection emphatically affirms the re-creation of man through death. Dying to live—this is the thought that streams through the fabric and the faith of Christianity. Nature itself reveals this fact: In dying, the seed lives. So, in dying, man lives. It is the law of life.

The Continued Life

Immortality is not the Christian's chief concern. Nowhere did Jesus place emphasis upon it. The word suggests primarily the idea of living on and on. Nothing in it hints of a fullness of life. It merely defines itself in terms of a continued existence, stressing only length and area, like a wheel that turns over and over in the same area with nothing else to do but turn and spin. In one sense, to live forever could be tremendously empty. But to live throughout ages to come and to be filled and possessed by the abundant life in Christ would be the highest desired results of one's faith and hope. Jesus repeats, "I am the resurrection and the life." From this statement we discover the revealed will of God, the Father Almighty, and his eternal scheme of things made plain, reassuring the believer of a life not made for mere existence, but filled to overflowing with the everlasting qualities of the Christ. In him is the continued, creative life.

When Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life," he left no doubt that in him is a life that

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is like the bay awaiting the incoming tide to fill its boundaries. Man, like the bay, becomes empty and dead unto the infilling life hid with Christ, the giver of life abundant.

The resurrection of Jesus is significant but his victory bears a greater significance when it triumphs in the hearts of men. This victory comes only when men completely empty themselves to the full commitment of God's will. In this, and only in this, the death and resurrection of Christ find their intended purpose and objective attained. The redeemed burst forth from their entombed lives into the larger life hid with Christ Jesus.

The Larger Life

Jesus saw the multitudes about him and saw that they were still entombed with no thought for a resurrection within. They were dead in trespasses and sins, and on seeing them he had great compassion on them as he said, "I am come that ye might have life and have it to the full." St. Paul expressed it this way: "If in this life *only* we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Jesus was trying to focus their attention upon a higher plane of thought and hope in the larger life. He wanted to show them that life, here and now, must be lived in terms of the continued, creative life. He wanted, more than anything, for them to see the distinction between life and living, release and imprisonment, resurrection and immortality. Jesus wanted to take them by the hand and walk with them to the place in their Christian experience when they could boldly say, "We know that we have passed from death unto life." For in this, he would witness an outward expression stimulated by an inward, spiritual grace triumphantly operating within them—a great grace setting free its power, giving men assurance and hope of the abundant, everlasting life.

The Christ—the Son of the Living God

By S. MacLean Gilmour

When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.
Matthew 16: 13-16.

THERE is every indication from the notices in the Gospels that Jesus began his public ministry in an inconspicuous fashion. It had no dramatic prelude or frontispiece. When our Lord went out to the wilderness to be baptized by John he was only one among a large crowd that had thronged about the desert prophet. Our earliest evangelist makes it clear that Jesus' baptismal experience was not a public attestation of his role as teacher, prophet, or Messiah. On the contrary, it was an experience personal to himself. It was Jesus, not the bystanders, who saw the heavens opened and the Spirit descending as a dove. The voice that spoke, spoke to Jesus himself, not to the Baptist or to the crowd. It was only Jesus who heard the words: "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Even after Jesus had begun his work in Capernaum and other Galilean centers, even after he had made his first converts and gathered his first disciples, it is probable that he exercised his healing and teaching ministry for a considerable period without attracting much public curiosity or attention. His advent as a herald of the Kingdom of God caused scarcely a stir among the populace. Our Lord attempted no prophetic pose. On the contrary, he deliberately avoided every suggestion of mimicry or simulation. He did not dwell in the wasteland; he lived among the people. He did not clothe himself in bizarre attire; he dressed in the ordinary accouterments of everyday life—a robe, a loincloth and sandals. He did not support himself on locusts and wild honey; he ate and drank as did ordinary men. On one occasion ill-wishers even accused him of being a glutton and a drunkard.

Fanatic or Prophet?

During the initial period of his ministry, Jesus gathered his circle of intimate disciples, proclaimed his gospel of the Kingdom, and exercised his gracious gift of healing. In the course of time it was inevitable that men should begin to ask questions about his work and mission. Some were content to dismiss him as a crank or an impostor. Others went to the extent of hinting that he was in league with Beelzebub, the prince of demons, and that he performed his mighty works in col-

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lusion with the devil. Bitter enemies even circulated the rumor that he was a lunatic, and the Gospels tell us that this ugly insinuation finally came to the ears of Jesus' immediate family. "And when his friends heard it," runs the account, "they went out to seize him, for the people were saying," —this is my own translation of the Greek text— " 'He is beside himself.' " The charge of lunacy was a dangerous one in a superstitious age. Mental derangement was attributed to demon possession, and the unfortunate victim could be ostracized, confined to the tombs, shackled to a post, doused in cold water, or even put to death. It is not three hundred years since certain wretched women were called witches and then publicly burned on the commons in Salem, Massachusetts.

Great Insights of the Prophets

While some people waved Jesus aside as a fool or a fanatic, more serious folk tried to classify him according to a familiar pattern. One of the first to suggest itself was the category of prophet. The great religious teachers, interpreters and guides among the Israelites in ancient times had been the prophets. A remarkable sequence of great men, beginning with Moses and Elijah and including Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah and Jeremiah, had proclaimed the will of God, rebuked the nation for its sins, summoned the people to repentance, held out the threat of divine intervention and punishment, and reiterated the gracious promise of salvation.

Gradually the order of the prophets died out. For almost three hundred years before the coming of Christ, no one had appeared in Judea who seemed to the people to rank with the great of the past. There were some who thought that John the Baptist, when he taught in the barren wasteland to the east of the Jordan, was standing in the great prophetic succession. John's work, however, was soon interrupted by his arrest and imprisonment. Nevertheless, his ministry had quickened the life of many who heard him, and it was natural that Jesus, when he undertook his mission and declared his message, should have been closely linked with his predecessor. Matthew is our authority for the statement that Jesus, when he entered the capital city of Palestine on his last visit, was greeted by the crowds with the exclamation: "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth of Galilee."

In retrospect it is evident that "prophet" was not an entirely inadequate description of Jesus. A study of our Lord's teaching demonstrates that much of it was a reiteration of the great insights of Amos, Hosea and Jeremiah. The God whom Jesus proclaimed—the God of absolute righteousness, of infinite patience, of tender mercy—was the God whom the prophets had known and of whom they had spoken to the people of their times. The goal of history for Jesus was the realization of God's will upon earth as it is already realized in heaven. Jesus called this underlying purpose of God's holy design "the Kingdom of God." The phrase was new—or almost new—but the idea was an ancient one and had been the burden of Isaiah's message as it had been of Amos' and Micah's. There were fresh elements in Jesus' gospel, to be sure, and new emphases. The fatherhood of God, the joys of fellowship with God, the radical demands of the new righteousness—all this takes on a new urgency in the Gospels. Nevertheless, it had its anticipation in the Hebrew prophetic tradition, and Jesus' spiritual ancestry was the great succession of men of God who had spoken to their people from the days of Moses and Elijah to those of the authors of Ruth and Jonah. There is no sharp break between the Old Testament and the New.

Let me recall the words of my text. When Jesus asked his followers at Caesarea Philippi, "Whom do men say that I am?" the answer he received was "One of the prophets"—possibly John the Baptist come to life again, or Elijah, or Jeremiah. This was the best explanation that outsiders could give of the problem that grew more and more insistent with the passage of time: How was Jesus to be understood? What were the grounds of his authority? What was the nature of his commission? The category of prophet lay at hand and seemed to fit, and men and women who heard him teaching in the synagogue, by the roadside, on a mountain, in a house, or from a boat anchored offshore, heard in his voice the authentic tones of the great prophetic messengers of God.

In our own time Jesus is still occasionally dismissed, just as he was in the first century, as an impracticable idealist or a religious crank. There are even those who try to account for him as a hapless victim of neurotic hallucination. Books have been written on "The Mental Health of Jesus" and on "Jesus and Delusions of Grandeur." On the whole, however, Jesus' teachings still impress most people, including those who are not Christians, as eminently sane, extraordinarily penetrating, ethically pure, and religiously profound. Even the most secularly minded among us are glad to accord Jesus the accolade of ethical teacher *par excellence*, spiritual hero or religious genius.

More Than a Prophet

For all but the most unfriendly outsiders, Jesus in his own time was recognized as a prophet or as a Jewish teacher. These descriptions satisfied the widespread curiosity concerning the man of Nazareth and classified him in a satisfactory niche. It was not long, however, before such titles became increasingly inadequate for those who companied with him as he went in and out of the villages of Galilee. Jesus was a teacher, yes, but something more than a teacher. Jesus was a prophet, yes, but something more than a prophet. So, when our Lord followed up his first question, "Whom do men say that I am?" with the second, "Whom do ye say that I am?" the reply that the disciples made through their spokesman Peter was the quiet but confident claim: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

The hope of a Messiah was an ancient one in the

Hebrew-Jewish tradition. After the death of David, the glories that had been Israel's rapidly faded. The nation was divided into two petty states, and dangers from without threatened their independence and, indeed, their very existence. Against this backdrop of defeat and imminent disaster the messianic hope emerged. A descendant of the Davidic house—a shoot out of the stump of Jesse, to use the vigorous Old Testament metaphor—would raise the tabernacle of David that had fallen and close up the breaches thereof. At first men thought of the Messiah wholly in nationalistic terms. He would be a mighty warrior who would overthrow the enemies of God's people and restore Israel to its earlier position of power and prestige. In time the prophets, particularly Isaiah, purged the hope of its dross and refined it as pure gold. The Messiah would be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever."

God Incarnate

For the disciples who had been privileged to enjoy the intimacy of Jesus' immediate fellowship, Jesus was more than a wise teacher and more than a prophet. In him the wisdom and the power and the grace of God had come into effective operation in human life. In the fullness of time the Word of God had become flesh and dwelt among men, and the disciples had been vouchsafed a vision of him, full of grace and truth. There was only one Jewish vehicle of thought that could do justice to their experience of God in the bosom of time. "Whom say ye that I am?" asked Jesus. "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ,"—the Messiah—"the Son of the living God."

I remarked a few moments ago that the great majority of our contemporaries—even the most secular of them—are ready to admit that Jesus was a great religious teacher. For many of them that title is an adequate description. To put it back into the language of the first century, to the question, "Whom say ye that I am?" they reply, "John the Baptist, or Elias, or Jeremias, or one of the prophets." In the main stream of Christian tradition, however, the plumb lines of ethical teacher, spiritual athlete and religious genius are too short. They are true enough as far as they go, but they do not go far enough. They cannot measure the depths of our experience of God Incarnate in history. The term Messiah is now obsolete and almost useless. In fact, it lost its meaning almost as soon as Christianity ceased to be a Jewish sect and came to enlist its converts chiefly from among the non-Jewish peoples of the Mediterranean basin. Even in the letters of St. Paul, Messiah, or Christ as the Hebrew title was rendered in Greek, had come to be used almost as a proper name. Nevertheless, the experience of God's enlightening, inspiring and redeeming presence in the Jesus who taught in Galilee and who died on a gibbet outside the gate of Jerusalem—the experience that Peter as spokesman for the early church articulated in the words, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"—that experience has grown deeper and richer with the march of the centuries. I have never discovered a doctrine of the Incarnation that answers all the questions posed by the intellect. Even the most elaborate and sophisticated leaves me with a sense of dissatisfaction. Nevertheless, I cannot doubt the *fact* of the Incarnation, for I have been privileged to grow up in the fellowship of the saints, to share some of the fruit of God's incursion into human life in Christ Jesus, and to see, in part and through a glass darkly, what Peter meant when he said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Titles and Texts

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

Albert E. Glock, Christ Lutheran, Normal, Ill. "The Church in Your House." I Cor. 16:19—*The churches of Asia send greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church that meets in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord.*

Graham R. Hodges, First Congregational, Ticonderoga, N. Y. "U.S.A. Unconfidential." I Kings 19:18—*Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.*

Charles R. Woodson, First Baptist, Hudson, Wis. "The Cross and Joy Unspeakable." Luke 1:68—*Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people.*

L. W. Hauter, First Presbyterian, Oelwein, Iowa. "Other Iron Curtains." Luke 16:26—*Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed.*

Andrew P. Burton, First Baptist, Rensselaer, N. Y. "Standard Equipment." Eph. 6:11—*Put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*

Thomas R. Pendell, Community Methodist, Newport Beach, Calif. "April Fool's Day." I Cor. 4:10a—*We are fools for Christ's sake.*

H. K. Grose, Camp Point, Ill. "Spiritual Television." Heb. 11:27—. . . *seeing him who is invisible.*

The Tradition of the Fathers

By Charles P. Bowles . . .

The Lord forbid it me that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee. I Kings 21:3.

I SHALL be eternally grateful for courageous Naboth, a man who was unwilling to surrender something he prized highly despite the fact that a king asked him to do it; a man who considered something of more value than the material assets of life. As a consequence he stood unflinchingly before his king and said, "No." It makes us want to stand up and cheer after the request of Ahab, "Give me thy vineyard," to hear the undaunted reply of Naboth saying, "The Lord forbid it me that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee."

The controversy arose over a vineyard that belonged to Naboth which Ahab was desirous of securing because it joined his palace property. He wanted to make it a "garden of herbs" to which he could retire in the cool of the evening and rest from the hard and vexing task of ruling a contentious people. Ahab was an acquisitive sort of person and had married a more acquisitive queen, Jezebel. They were accustomed to getting what they wanted, irrespective of the methods. But they were not accustomed to dealing with a man like Naboth—a man who had the courage of his convictions.

It so happened that this particular vineyard was a prize possession of Naboth's. It had been in the possession of his family for generations and he was not willing to part with the inheritance of his fathers. It was not the price of the land in which he was interested. Ahab had offered to give him the worth of it in money or to exchange a better vineyard with him. It was not that it was merely an inheritance of land, but that there was a tradition of ownership for generations. He was unwilling to dispose of the tradition of his fathers. "The Lord forbid it me that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee," he calmly but resolutely replied.

Modern Ahabs

How we do need the spirit of Naboth today when so many modern Ahabs are trying to get us to surrender the tradition of our fathers—traditions that are priceless, that represent the best in life. There are Ahabs on every hand trying their best to get us to give up the priceless heritage handed down by our fathers, offering us anything and everything to surrender the goodly inheritance we have received.

That this America and the American way of life we so highly prize are an inheritance from our fathers is a fact too obvious to mention. Civilization, like coral islands, seems to be built of the very blood and bone of past generations. But there are modern Ahabs who would take this away from us, who are asking us to surrender that upon which the greatness of our nation was built. They have not the slightest interest in perpetuating the moral and spiritual qualities of our forefathers.

Plymouth Rock

I shall never forget the time years ago when I stood at Plymouth Rock. It was surrounded by an impassable fence and one had to look at it from a distance. We have been most zealous in defending Plymouth Rock from souvenir hunters—but how lax we have been in perpetuating the tradition of our fathers! After visiting Plymouth Rock I went to the obelisk which marks the grave of the first governor of the colony, Governor Bradford. At the base of the monument are these impressive words: *"Quo patres difficillime adepti sunt nolite turpiter relinquere"*—"What our fathers with so much difficulty secured, do not basely relinquish."

No one who has read his newspaper recently or listened to his radio or looked at TV will doubt for one moment that we have relinquished the tradition of our fathers. The Puritans were examples—real symbols—of a moral and ethical way of living on which the greatness of this nation was built. I do not mean the strait-laced piety with which we often characterize them; maybe that should be forgotten. But there was a rock-ribbed morality about them—as rock-ribbed as the New England coast to which they came—which should never be surrendered.

The T. Lamar Caudel fiasco has dramatically brought this to our attention. Indifferently we have said, "It can't happen here." But it has, and it involves our city and people who live in our city. The sorry spectacle of corruption in our nation has been brought to our very doorstep. It has involved our city in such a way that something should be done about it. A slur has been cast against our city and its law-enforcement agency. If it is not true we ought to deny it vigorously and stand by the sanctity of our city. We ought to uphold our law enforcement and make it impossible for lawlessness and gangsterism to exist here. If it is true, we are not true to the tradition of our fathers, who believed in basic morality and Christian prin-

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CHARLES P. BOWLES has served as minister of Dilworth Methodist Church, Charlotte, N. C., since 1949. He is a graduate of the divinity school of Duke University and is a leader in the field of Christian education. His sermon will be helpful to pastors who are interested in meeting the issues of what is being called America's "moral depression."

ciples, if we do not rise up and make suitable amends immediately.

This whole affair is part of a tragic and deplorable condition which is smothering the decency of our nation. Corruption is a big word in American politics these days. And no wonder! We have opened our eyes (and that's hopeful)—opened our eyes in amazement over the revelations which began with General Vaughan's deep freezes and continued to the other extreme of mink coats. In this parade aided by the Fulbrights, Kefauvers and others, we have been made aware of a situation so repugnant that a righteous indignation must be aroused. Surely we agree wholeheartedly with former President Hoover when he says, "There is a dangerous weakening of morality and ethical standards in public life generally." In agreeing with this—and I believe we do—do we realize that this moral undermining is not confined to the conduct of individuals? As the *Christian Century* said editorially, "How many of us realize that, in a far deeper sense than any scandals involving mink coats, the very foundations on which the republic rests are being eaten away?" We are surrendering a precious inheritance to the Ahabs of this day.

Underlying Causes

What is happening is but an alarming symptom of our times. The underlying cause is much deeper. We have gone far afield from those principles which made for the greatness of our nation. We seem to think that what we have is more important than where we came from. We have plenty of things but not plenty of character. We have harnessed electricity but we have not harnessed ourselves. We have wanted what we wanted when we wanted it and have not been too concerned about what the other fellow needed. If I may paraphrase words of Edward L. R. Elson in his review of the book *Washington Confidential* in a recent issue of The Pulpit: We learned how to jazz our music and syncopate our thinking; to philosophize with boogie-woogie and aesthetically cavort with jitterbug and jive. In art we have reached the exalted place of producing paintings that look to my untrained eye like a blur due to astigmatism. In literature we have appealed to the obscene, indecent and profane. It is not so much what all of this says about those who produce it, but rather what it says about us who allow it and make it possible. We are brilliant but unstable, clever but unhappy, comfortable but comfortless.

Out of this spirit has grown a moral lag that is eating away at the vitals, the very foundations upon which our nation rests. As we look at these men being investigated one by one, we must realize —as Ansley Moore, another Pulpit preacher, has said—that the real villain never came on the stage in this nationwide drama. The culprit remained just offstage, yet he was always there, like a ghost in the background or like the rabbit in "Harvey." The real culprit is the indifferent public. We are responsible.

We can be sure that the corruption we see in public life is but a reflection of the lack of integrity and basic morality in our nation. Public officials do not bribe themselves. We may be sure of that. If there are public servants who can be bribed, there have to be those who want to bribe them. Who can ever forget the words of Joseph ("Yellow Kid") Weil, a Chicagoan who is perhaps the world's greatest confidence man? He remarked that a confidence man's whole stock in trade is playing on the larcenous desires of his victims and their real desire to get something for nothing. Here is the nub of the situation. It is not a state of affairs peculiar to Washington which requires attention; it is a general crumbling of ethical standards; it is surrendering the priceless inheritance of the past to the modern Ahabs who say, "Give me thy vineyard."

Yes, you and I are responsible. Just as you and I were there "when they crucified my Lord" so are we somewhere in the mob that makes up an indifferent nation. If our churches were fulfilling their duty as the conscience of the nation, our country would not be so morally weak as to let this infection take root. In magazine article after magazine article as I have seen this whole sorry mess unfold there has been one constant refrain that recurred over and over: "Beneath and behind it all can be seen the disappearance of firm moral standards." We have surrendered to Ahab! Do we not realize that it is up to us to create the kind of moral climate in which such corruption cannot exist?

Subversive Inactivity

Why have we surrendered to Ahab? I think I can sum it up in a term that can be understood in the vernacular of our day. It is due to what Frank Fagerburg calls "subversive inactivity." The enemies of our country with all of their tireless work and devilish cleverness are not as damaging as millions of citizens who think of themselves as loyal but who are simply indifferent. They are not against democracy and the American way of life; they are simply too busy making money and having a good time to be bothered. H. G. Wells focalized this problem in the petulant protest of the croquet player in one of his novels: "I don't care. The world may be going to pieces. The Stone Age may be returning. This may, as you say, be the sunset of civilization. I'm sorry but I can't help it this morning. I have other engagements. . . . I am going to play croquet with my aunt at half past twelve today." Does this shock you—you, who when confronted with supporting the finer things of life today "just can't be bothered?"

This corruption *in* government is just a part of a deeper corruption—a corruption *of* government. This is part of a whole new problem which cannot be discussed here, except incidentally. My thesis has always been that it is not the business of the church to make a good government, but to make good men who will create good government. Therefore, it is a very personal problem.

Let me illustrate. The great wall of China was a gigantic structure, requiring immense expenditure and labor, and when finished seemed a superb way to gain security; but within a few years of its

building it was breached three times by the enemy. Only note, it was breached not by breaking down the wall, but by bribing the gate-keepers. It was the human element that failed; what collapsed was character. Is this not our current trouble? "The Lord forbid it me that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee."

If we are to take honest inventory with ourselves we would have to admit that this is our trouble. We have been too busy to orient our souls each day to God. Our Bible has become dusty with disuse. We have stopped weekly fellowship with Christian friends (this is why church attendance is so important). We have not looked around each day to put our good intentions to work. Some years ago a Yale professor lost his religious faith and here is his honest explanation of what had happened: "I never consciously gave up a religious belief. It was as if I had put my beliefs in a drawer, and when I opened it there was nothing there at all." See what subversive inactivity had done to this man.

Moderate Churchmanship

Most corruption comes to a nation because those who ought to care do not care enough. We are interested, but it is just a moderate interest. Samuel Butler often sneered at the Christian religion. He once wrote this in his notebook: "There will be no comfortable and safe development of our social arrangements—I mean we shall not get infanticide and the permission to suicide, nor cheap and easy divorce, till Jesus Christ's ghost has been laid." He added sarcastically, "And the best way to lay it is to be a moderate churchman." My friends, our country will never lose the basic moral principles upon which it was founded until the ghost of Jesus Christ has been laid, and still, as always, the best way to lay it is to be a moderate churchman.

There is no way to have a better Charlotte or a better America except to have better Charlotteans and better Americans. We must have more Naboths who will rise up and stoutly declare: "The Lord forbid it me that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee."

Let every citizen begin with a personal heart-searching and conscience-testing and humble repentance, with the prayer of the psalmist, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any evil in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." This is an hour when each individual, high and low, needs to call upon God for personal renewal, for the only way to national renewal and reinforcement is by renewed and rededicated people.

Let's not stop this sermon here. Let us list some practical things we can do: You can refuse to support any enterprise that is not legitimate. You can support all law-enforcement agencies. You can vote in every election intelligently. You can be informed. You can read, listen and look critically. You can love goodness and hate evil. You can support your church as you have never done before and stop being a moderate churchman, if you have been one. You can walk closer to Christ than you have ever done and have his mind in all you do. You can pray for America. You can be a Naboth saying, "The Lord forbid it me that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee." How many of these are you doing?

A Pastoral Prayer

6-30-5

By Oliver deW. Cummings

Minister of Evangelism and Education, First Baptist, Los Angeles, California

ALMIGHTY GOD, our Father, we shut out the distractions of our hectic and disordered lives that we may feel thy nearness in this thy sanctuary. Speak to us anew this day. Quiet our restless spirits. Calm our troubled hearts. Bring peace to our lives in the midst of confusion and struggle.

We acknowledge that sin is ever present with us. Forgive us, O God, and cleanse us. Bestow upon us power to overcome, to be more like that One who is our example and our Lord.

We pray for all who are near and dear to us, whatever their special needs, in sickness and in health, in joy and in adversity. And we pray for those whom we know not but who stand in peculiar need of thy healing and helping power.

Give to us flaming hearts and open hands. May we surround ourselves with thy spirit so that we may be able to surrender our wills to thee eagerly and sincerely. Help us to live our lives on the frontiers of human thought and achievement, and give us the imagination to see that these frontiers may be amid the patterns of our daily choices. Make us courageous and spiritually sensitive that we may venture as Christian pioneers into areas of human struggle and neighborliness.

Give us a passion for the souls of our fellow men, a deep concern for their highest welfare, a dedication to the supreme task of relating them to thee. Cause us to be "heralds and harbingers" of the Kingdom of our Christ.

Make us to be architects of the new order which Christ is establishing, where every life is precious, where freedom is assured and equality of opportunity. Help us to sense, even in a time of war, that world order begins with us, that world peace starts in our neighborhood and is expressed through justice and cooperation in the resolving of tensions and the establishing of cooperation.

Give us the aroused conscience, the rugged faith and the purity of purpose of our Christ, in whose spirit we pray. Amen.

HARRY MILTON TAYLOR has served as the minister of Calvary Methodist Church, East Orange, N. J., since 1943. He was formerly associate professor of systematic theology and philosophy of religion at Drew Theological Seminary. He is the author of Faith Must Be Lived, *published last year by Harper. His sermon provides an interesting contrast to the sermon "Religion and the Needs of Men," which appeared in last month's issue.*

Dangers of Socialism

By Harry Milton Taylor

I AM aware that in this congregation there are those who are sincerely, and from what they believe to be Christian principles, advocates of socialism. I am also aware that such are in the minority. I am acutely aware that the majority of you are what socialists call "Republican reactionaries." I am aware that there are dangers in my speaking about the dangers of socialism, not least among which is the possibility that I may give false comfort to the false friends of free enterprise: those who despise socialism for wrong reasons, whose interest in the status quo is selfish, whose objection to a new economic system is nothing but greed dressed up as a defense of God and country.

I am aware of the danger of oversimplification, as I have long been aware of the danger of overcomplication. One way to escape from truth is to oversimplify it; another is to overcomplicate it. If possible, we must avoid both ruses.

I am aware that if I become practical, if I touch someone's pocketbook, if I say something that stabs the conscience deeply, I may be accused of not preaching the gospel. Why don't I mind my proper business? . . . after all, I know little about politics and less about economics.

I could continue longer to recognize and tremble before the dynamite in this morning's topic. I do tremble. You who know me realize that I do not run these risks for a small reason, since you have learned, alas, that I have but little courage.

I am impelled to speak out because alarming numbers of our people are being misled to suppose that if one is a true Christian he will also, necessarily, be a socialist. We hear on every side that socialism, with its program of sharing and its avowed determination to care for the needy, is closer than communism or capitalism to the teaching and the spirit of Jesus Christ. "Here is a higher moral alternative," pleads the propaganda. Because this argument is no longer academic in our country, since it has become a vital issue, we must consider it and decide for or against it.

Before I speak against it, I will define what I mean by socialism. I mean the surrender to national government of the control of all essential industries and universal welfare services.

The scripture of the morning is from St. Matthew, the first eleven verses of the fourth chapter:

I

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Socialism is peculiarly susceptible to the temptation of materialism. There is in the system and in the spirit of its proponents a fatal weakness for physical things. The effect of its ideals is to foster and further the assumption that man can live by bread alone, that houses and food and leisure time are of primary importance.

Let us say frankly and earnestly that there was need for, that there still is need for, the Marxist denunciation of capitalist exploitation. So long as we are free to govern ourselves and to exercise some control over others, so long as there is within us any selfishness or brutality, the free enterprise system is in danger of the evil of exploitation. We always need prophets, such as there have been from Old Testament times, prophets who will cry out against our inclination to mistreat those who are less fortunate or less powerful than we.

The intelligent among the champions of free enterprise are fully aware of this. Staunch defenders of the American way say aggressively that one of our most important tasks, now and always, is to mend our own ways and keep on mending them. Ours is the better system, but we must work it better if we are to make the best of it.

Having said that, let us not nod our heads as though to say, "But of course, now let us get on to important business." Here is no place to say, casually, "But of course . . ." It is essential that we hold steadily before quickened consciences the danger of greed and exploitation within our own system. There must be in us all a sincere determination to love as Christians love, if our way is to triumph over socialism. So I repeat that the Marxist crusade against unfairness and unkindness was, in part at least, warranted and worth while.

But what happened to the Marxist view is apt to happen to anyone who gives major effort to economic reform. We tend to become preoccupied with such an area of concern until we can see nothing

else. Determined to secure bread for the victims of inconsiderateness, Marx fell under the delusion that nothing but bread matters. "Man is what he eats," was the conclusion of one of Marx's (so-called Christian) disciples. This is the perversion of economic reform. This is the falsehood of materialism.

Socialism tends always to deteriorate into materialism. Its focus and zeal exaggerate and distort the values of physical things. Admit that socialism is idealistic. But what is its ideal? Its ideal is materialistic. Its sermons and services are forever leading its followers to make shelter and food and leisure time their paradise. Attention is directed hypnotically toward wages and subsidies and pensions, until *in effect* men are led to believe, or to act as though they believed, that they live by bread alone.

With such materialism Christians can make no peace. They know it to be a deadly corruption of truth. Not only for an hour a week when we come together to worship God, but in all our experiences, whether we act as individuals or in social groups, Christians insist that priority be given to the things which will survive after everything physical has perished. Spiritual realities (like kindness and courage and integrity and good persons, which will endure when all flesh has decayed and time has ceased to be) must be elevated to and kept at the top of our scale of values. Therefore, any system which tempts us to put our choicest treasures where moth corrupts and where thieves break through and steal, is diabolically dangerous. It is my conviction that such temptation is intrinsically, ineradicably, a part of socialism. The temptation does not arise from misuses or misinterpretations, but from the very ideal itself.

A British scientist warned moderns against becoming discontented minds in contented bodies. What Christians must fear is the socialism would produce a society of damned souls in contented bodies.

II

Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, if thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

I trust I am not accommodating this second section of our scripture so as to do it violence. I am sure that the lesson I now draw from it does not exhaust the whole of its meaning.

But surely the demonic temptation here depicted is the temptation to suppose that our world is safe and secure even for the fools and the lawless, because it is God's world. There is a kind of sentimental nonsense which folds its hands and says, "God is good. This is his world. There is no evil. No matter what I do, he will take care of me." What a devilish lie is implied in the words, "lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." God did not create, or intend to create, a world safe and secure unconditionally. There is no ground in Scripture or experience for supposing that God favors stupidity or foolhardiness or disobedience, even with pious faces. Any person who will cast himself from the pinnacle of a temple for no good reason will get from God what he deserves. We have divinely given reason and conscience so that we may discern and obey the laws of the divine order which we call our world.

Indeed, our world is anything but the kind of order which will permit us to live safely and securely without our striving to know and obey its laws. The constitution of our universe is, contrariwise, such that men are forced to use their initiative, their muscles and skills, their best moral judgment, if they are to survive. God's wonderful world is ruthlessly hostile to sloth and slovenliness —and to faith without works. So opposite to the devil's paradise is God's world that its very structure, its inescapable difficulties, demand intelligent and diligent enterprise.

The reason is not hard to see. God wants to make men of us. Our world, his world, is *therefore* costly and difficut and dangerous. God is not playing a game. He did not beget the human race so that he or men could get a little fun out of life. Look at God on the cross and you realize that creation isn't a picnic. He's after something that he risked death to get. He wants strong sons. He wants the kind of character that can withstand the acids of time, the kind of spirit that is immortal because it has become indestructible, He wants children, stable and sturdy, holy with moral heroism. So the world he created for the bearing and rearing of his children is a world suited to such results. Our world, God's world, is deliberately unsafe and insecure for softness or sloth or their ilk. The fatherhood of God is anything but paternalistic.

Intrinsic to socialism is the danger of paternalism. One of the most penetrating editorials I have read in years was written under the caption, "The State Is My Shepherd." The state is my shepherd —I shall not want! Here is the sickly hope that is infecting the American spirit: that the Great White Father in Washington will eventually give us such complete care that should we cast ourselves from the pinnacle of the temple, we should not be permitted to dash our foot against a stone.

Some weeks ago I met with a committee of the World Council of Churches. We spent much of our time discussing the problem of work, by common agreement one of the major problems confronting contemporary Christians. At one turn of the discussion a distinguished British cleric and scholar looked at his pipe a little reproachfully and said, "You know, all this is very interesting for us in England at the present time." (He must have been acutely aware that leaders of the church helped to convert England to socialism.) "We are confronted with a curious dilemma: having made all of our workers secure, we are now trying to discover how to get them to work!"

The diseases of paternalism are inevitable in an economic system that sets up controls which guarantee everyone first basic minimums of livelihood

and welfare, and then an equal share of securities and services and profits. (And don't ever forget that socialism is a profit system!) The system itself encourages, and capitalizes on, and then collapses from, the sloth which is native to most of us. If there is a person here from whom sloth is not a dominant temptation, he might prosper in a socialist state, if he could find enough exceptions like himself to make up such a state.

But sloth is not the worst evil to which socialism is peculiarly vulnerable. Worse is the guarantee of comfort and security: the evil of overprotection, of a philosophy and practice which idealizes and seeks and accepts such overprotection. The result is an infantile paralysis of the human spirit utterly alien to God's purpose and world. A psychologist calls this "Momism." An economist calls it "paternalism." The evil itself is a society in which everyone has a guarantee of safety and security, of services and profits, and where such old-fashioned virtues as self-reliance and enterprise are unnecessary, optional, and (if the whole truth is told) silly.

Socialism sees protection as more important than production, equality and security as above freedom and responsibility and initiative. This turns the divine order of human values upside down. And if the subversion is to be defended on the ground that it eliminates the hardships and injustices of free enterprise, then we must insist that the cure is more deadly than the disease.

Let none now begin to say, "Wonderful! If we had the sort of America that our minister wants, we wouldn't have to bother about aged or weak or sick persons." Let us resist such diabolical countertemptation, for we *are* our brother's keepers. The question is not whether the needy shall be cared for or whether we should be generous and fair in our dealings, the question is *how*. The point is that the method of socialism vitiates any brotherliness that may be in its motive. Complete state control of essential industries and welfare services to guarantee "social security and justice for all" is one which fosters and feeds upon paternalism, producing inevitably the attendant vices of spiritul anemia: sloth, irresponsibility, decay of initiative, softness of character, disdain and surrender of personal liberties.

In *The Brothers Karamazov*, the Russian novelist Dostoievsky brilliantly analyzes this aspect of the Temptation. The Grand Inquisitor, a benevolent despot, says to Jesus, "Hadst thou turned the stones into bread, mankind would have run after thee like a flock of sheep, grateful and obedient, though forever trembling, lest thou withdraw thy hand . . . In bread there was offered thee an invincible banner; give bread, and man will worship thee. . . . But what happened? Instead of taking men's freedom from them, thou didst make it greater than ever! Didst thou forget that man prefers peace, and even death, to freedom . . . No science will give men bread so long as they remain free. In the end they will lay their freedom at our feet, and say to us, 'Make us your slaves, but feed us.' "

Yes, assuredly, God cares for us—but carefully, so as not to spoil us. This is the radical difference between "the Lord is my shepherd" and "the state is my shepherd."

III

Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

The thing I fear most in socialism is the almost irresistible temptation of power among the governors. "Jesus, you can be God, I'll give you control over the whole earth." Let no one here suppose that there is not in his heart this demonic temptation: the desire to be God, to become absolute sovereign over his fellows, to have them fall down and worship him, to be above attack and criticism so that no one is able effectually to block or alter his decisions. "Power tends to corrupt, absolute power absolutely."

Put a policeman on the corner, elevate him above his fellows, and what is likely to happen? If you do not have a town council set over the fire department, what is likely to happen? If you do not have an official board who can tell the minister off occasionally, or a minister who can admonish lay people occasionally, what is likely to happen? You know. As long as we are as bad as you and I are, we need to be organized into competing and checking and counterchecking groups, each of sufficient power to keep the others from rising to excessive power.

Yes, certainly we have to fear concentrations of power under free enterprise: the chain store that can control prices, the labor union that can browbeat management. But in our competitive economy we have government over against the private combine guarding us against its excesses. Under socialism, who is to administer an antitrust law if government is the violator?

I do not want the government in my country to have sole power over industry because I would not then be safe from tyranny. Unrestricted power in government is an icy decline into dictatorship. That is why wherever socialism has been thoroughly tried, however idealistically it may have begun, it has eventually fallen into some form of autocracy. It may begin with sincere intention to be democratic, but human beings aren't good enough to carry out the resolution because of the temptations that come with uncontrolled control.

The Christian doctrine of the sinfulness of man —especially pride, willfulness, the lust to be God —is a sober warning against socialism. If every person elected to Washington to control our industries and universal welfare services were an angel, it might work. But since everyone is not an angel, as a citizen interested in his own freedom and in the freedom of his children and friends and

in the freedom of the peoples of the earth, I want a powerful labor organization on hand and I want a powerful managerial organization on hand, so that when government begins to act arbitrarily and arrogantly I can turn to the counterchecking powers of such organizations. I want within labor unions smaller groups, united in power, so that no one man or oligarchical minority can enslave the majority. We need a strong Republican party to keep our Democratic leadership humble and sane and wholesome. And we need aggressive independent parties constantly arising to keep the "fear of God" in the hearts of the major parties. Governments made up of frail mortals need nothing so much as a loyal and powerful opposition.

Thus while socialists believe that they have a higher alternative to the "two evil systems of communism and capitalism," in actual practice the tendency of socialism has always been and will always be to drift into communism, that is into state autocracy. This is not to say that socialists are insincere when they say they hate communism. It is to say that they are overlooking the psychology and economics of sin.

God alone is good enough to withstand the temptations of sovereign power. His perfect holiness and loving kindness are our safeguards against his might. Wherever anyone else seizes, or is given, unconditional authority, first he becomes tyrannical, and then he sets himself up as God—which is why atheism is a consistent corollary of absolute autocracy. I, the Emperor, am God. We, the State, are divine.

"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." This is the *first* law. It is our only dependable guarantee of safety and security. If we keep God in his place in all our affairs, everything will turn out all right. But humans who do not worship and serve God eventually cease to be human; they become animals or things, or worse; they destroy themselves and each other.

When we do worship and serve God, this happens, and this is the conclusion of our scripture: "Then the devil leaveth him." What a magnificent climax! If we resist the temptation of materialism, if we resist the temptation of paternalism, if we resist the temptation of power, then what? "The devil leaveth him." That ought to be enough, but that's not all; there is a wonderful bonus: "And behold, the angels came and ministered unto him." Jesus said it succinctly, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and all else shall be added unto you."

A CHURCH IN A PRISON

A Sermon for Children by Ralph Conover Lankler

A SHORT time ago a very unusual church was opened and consecrated. It happened where you would not expect to find people building churches. It was in a place where I hope none of you will ever go except possibly as a visitor. This church is in the Clinton State Prison at Dannemora, New York.

It is called the Chapel of the Good Thief in honor of St. Dismas, who was one of the two malefactors who hung beside Christ on their crosses while he hung on his cross. The repentant thief, instead of railing at Jesus like the other man, said: "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom." To which the Savior replied, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."

The Chapel of the Good Thief was built by men every one of whom is a criminal. They are prisoners serving sentences for burglary, larceny, swindling and forgery. They had done wrong. But it was not too late for them to do good, and building a church was the best possible thing that they could do where they happened to be.

The stones were taken from an old cell block and practically everything in the church was made by the prisoners. They made stained glass windows and painted religious pictures on the walls. Although it is a Roman Catholic church, money was contributed by those of various religious beliefs and creeds. The 25-thousand-dollar organ which had seen service in a moving picture theater was given by two Hebrews from Brooklyn. The bell that calls the men to worship was given by a near-by Methodist church.

The prisoners of Dannemora did a grand thing under the spiritual and inspirational leadership of their chaplain, Father Ambrose R. Hyland. But how much better for them if they had been church builders before they went to prison. If they had been interested in the church, attending it regularly and contributing to its welfare, they would never have got into trouble, would they?

We want you to be builders of the church and we want you to do it while you are young. As you build the church in the community in which you live, you will be building a spirit of goodness within your lives and you will be doing the will of your Father who is in heaven.

RALPH CONOVER LANKLER is minister of First Presbyterian Church, Cortland, N. Y., and is the author of Stories to Tell Children, *published by Revell in 1946.*

Pulpit Post

Who Emurian Is

SIR: Having read his Ministry of Music column in recent issues of The Pulpit, I am interested in knowing more about Ernest K. Emurian—his educational background, experience, present position, etc.

New York, N. Y. GEORGE BRANDON.

[Most Americans interested in the field of church music and all longtime Pulpit readers need no further introduction to Ernest K. Emurian. But for reader Brandon and other newcomers: Pastor-Musician Emurian was educated at Davidson College, Union Theological Seminary (Richmond) and Princeton. He is the author-composer of many hymns, anthems, sacred and semiclassical songs and the author of two volumes of dramatized stories of hymns and hymn-writers. His articles on church music have appeared in many secular and religious journals. He is the minister of Elm Avenue Methodist Church, Portsmouth, Va., and brings to his column the point of view of the pastor as well as that of a recognized authority in the field of music.—THE EDITORS.]

The Pulpit Goes to Burma

SIR: Alone here with a family I have spent this Christmas Eve reading The Pulpit. I have been sort of dreading another Christmas alone in this big house where my sons and their mother made Christmases happy years ago. But one of the Pulpit Paragraphs gave me a real lift today and I am grateful. I'll be repeating that over and over. It is seven years since I saw my family. I would have retired last spring but the Burma government refused permission for a new family to come to take my place; we are hoping permission will come soon.

A. B. S. Chin Mission, E. CARROLL CONDICT.
Thayetmyo, Burma.

. . . And to India

SIR: I think you may be interested to know that when my wife and I were roaming through the market at Darjeeling in northern India we found a merchant who had his handfuls of seed offered for sale on the pages of The Pulpit.

The Danforth Foundation, KENNETH I. BROWN.
St. Louis, Mo. Executive Director.

Wrong Figure of Speech?

SIR: Allow me to express my deep appreciation for Oscar F. Blackwelder's sermon, "What Machinery May Do to People," in the September Pulpit. He has presented a masterful analysis of the relevance of the Christian faith for an age caught in the clutches of the machine.

Concerning two minor points, I would like to make suggestions. Dr. Blackwelder rightly observes that "across this small planet some people, especially some of the heads of certain governments, strut as if they were the 'owners' of things instead of 'guests' for a few years." Perhaps he might have added that ours is one of the "struttingest" among the nations. Again, the writer uses a figure of speech to say that our "leadership in Washington rises to the top of our citizenship as cream rises to the top of milk." Would it improve the figure to say that our "leadership in Washington rises to the top of our citizenship as foam rises to the top of a glass of beer"?

Clarksburg Baptist, JAMES P. WILBOURN.
Clarksburg, W. Va.

Enslin Is 'All Wet'

SIR: Morton S. Enslin is "all wet" when he says that Jesus never preached to children. There must have been many children among those who heard his matchless parables and they certainly would have been held spellbound by what he said.

It is certainly true that many preachers fail miserably in their attempts to preach to children but I doubt if such preachers do any better with the adults. If you cannot hold a child's attention the chances are that your message will not reach the average adult either.

If the preacher does not preach to the children before they reach the age of 10 or 11 he has missed his best chance—their most receptive and impressionable age. Ever since I first heard Henry Sloane Coffin preach to children I have had a junior congregation (two pastorates in 30 years) and almost every day something happens that has grown out of that part of my ministry that makes me thankful I have been doing it.

Fourth Evangelical & Reformed, A. M. BILLMAN.
Harrisburg, Pa.

SIR: I am amazed that the critics of Morton S. Enslin cannot see that his trenchant and incisive comments are truth, well salted with sly humor. Well, Jesus salted his truth with biting humor, as in the case of the "pearls before swine" verse, and "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Please continue Enslin—perhaps with the proviso that if his critics can do any better, let them try the job for a time.

Bethany Congregational, WILLIAM I. NEWMAN.
Los Angeles, Calif.

SIR: Likely our reaction to Morton Enslin's "Pulpit Patter" grows out of the fact that he makes us see ourselves as others see us. That often can be disconcerting! However, some of us vote for more of it.

Phenix Baptist, HINSON V. HOWLETT.
West Warwick, R. I.

SIR: I have been a reader of The Pulpit for many years. I like the new cover and all the articles and sermons. Enslin is my favorite. I turn to his page first when my new Pulpit comes. He has something to say to all ministers whether they like it or not. His contributions are valuable. After reading Enslin, I read the first article, then the sermons, and then Pulpit Post, etc., to the end.

First Baptist, CLARENCE E. SOUTHARD.
Sharon, Mass.

SIR: I think Morton S. Enslin has received some unnecessary cuffing recently. Is it necessary to point out the obvious: that Dr. Enslin writes in a satirical vein, a perfectly acceptable literary method? Personally, I find him delightful even though he prods me into much needed self-examination.

St. Thomas Lutheran, RICHARD C. RIFE.
St. Thomas, Pa.

Crisis Preaching

SIR: The recognition that Christianity has not kept pace with the advanced education of our society is imperative to its survival as an adequate philosophy of life. Certain replacements must be made, since the gradual progression of Christian principles has not occurred.

Science must replace sentimentality. The admission that not every letter of Holy Writ was divinely dictated in its present form is now essential. We must recognize that science tends more to verify than to destroy the authenticity of the biblical record.

Ethics must replace doctrine. The last 400 years, especially, have shown us that narrow doctrinal interpretations are a divine force. A divided Christendom can never be a vital force in establishing "one world." First principles must give way to sound principles of living, which will be attractive to non-Christians.

Spirituality must replace formality. The spirit of the teachings of Jesus must be viewed as more pertinent to our complex society than his actual words spoken in a comparatively simple age. The "letter of the law" has never proved adequate for every circumstance. Formality tends to produce stagnation. Ours is a world of flux.

Crisis philosophy must replace fear complex. "Crisis" is a key word in our day. A philosophy which encourages one in the crisis, rather than frightening him with the fear of "hellfire and damnation," is certainly more attractive.

Milton Christian, G. B. Wraith.
Milton, Ind.

The Ministry: Up or Down?

SIR: The Pulpit and the *Christian Century* might profitably compare the materials that go to the printer. The latter had just given a resumé of statistics showing that the ministry had sunk in comparative income to 25 per cent below the average in America. The Pulpit then came out with John R. Scotford's rosy story, "The Ministry Looks Up," in which he pictures the lot of not more than five per cent of American clergy. Dr. Scotford might have taken five minutes to scan the yearbook of his own church to find the proof that the great majority of us don't make the country clubs.

Evangelical Congregational, John F. C. Green.
McKeesport, Pa.

Condensation Not Helpful

SIR: As a subscriber to The Pulpit, I wish to say that I rarely read the "Summary Sermons" as I am not interested in sermon outlines. Full sermons are much more valuable because they contain illustrations and carefully developed thought sequences.

First Presbyterian, Frederick A. Roblee.
Bay City, Mich.

SIR: I rise to support those who value the sermon summaries. I am disappointed when they are omitted.

Grace United, Charles D. McLellan.
Napanee, Ont.

Blakemore and the Ministry

SIR: You ask in the January issue if we agree with W. B. Blakemore's pattern for the making of a Christian minister today.

One all too glaring omission stares at you when he discusses the things that the seminary student should do to become acquainted with every major facet of modern life. That is the production of food, with the accompanying understanding of the rural environment. One is reminded of Owen Meredith's lines: "We may live without poetry, music, art, books—even love, but where is the man who can live without dining?" Certainly "man does not live by bread alone" but he does live by bread. Seminary administrators who are concerned to give their students a fully rounded acquaintance with all that constitutes modern life will want them to spend some time finding out how the "other half" live and work on our farms.

First Presbyterian, Luther Bostrom.
Nunda, N. Y.

SIR: The Blakemore story (January) reflected a theologically antic spirit and tasted like dry gin. He is seeking more a Philonic synthesis of contemporary culture and the gospel than a preachment of Good News. Blakemore's students must think Christianity quite profound but hardly unique. From a biblical point of view the pattern of student discipline is slightly naive. I appreciate the attempt to compel students to evaluate the gospel in their own terms but the unsuspecting student operates as an independent contriver for he has obviously not committed himself to the living Christ. It appears that the student is expected to adapt rather than adopt the gospel. A rather homocentric ministry, I would say.

Christ Lutheran, Albert E. Glock.
Normal, Ill.

The MacKenzie Article

SIR: I guess I am the "eager brother" who would shout: "Not enough!" (Para. 2, "Sounding Brass and Tinkling Cymbal," September 1951.)

It might be that I am still young in the ministry and still imbued with high ideologies concerning the truth of the Word of God. I know that I am naive enough to declare that Moses did write the first five books of the Bible, that the stories of Adam and Eve are not mere fables, that John did write the book of Revelation, and that Jesus Christ arose from the dead as told in the Scriptures. If that is an indication of immaturity in faith, a faith which is not quite as mature and cultured as Dr. Lincoln MacKenzie's, I hope that further education and ambassadorship for Christ will not remove that simplicity of faith from me. For I do believe that it was God in St. Paul who wrote: "I can do *all* things through Christ who strengtheneth me," and I am just as sure that Paul had a faith, unblemished by doubt, in what he wrote.

When I go to my pulpit I want to take along my Bible, for I naively believe it to be the one and only authoritative source for life and faith. Let Dr. MacKenzie take Dale Carnegie's *How to Win Friends and Influence People* and Liebman's *Peace of Mind* up to the pulpit with him. No doubt they are good reading—I've read them both; but when it comes to preaching to my people I'll string along with Bishop Dibelius who wrote in the *Christian Century*: "In proclaiming the gospel, the minister will lift out from the unsearchable riches of Holy Scripture precisely the things that need to be said today," and with Marc Boegner, also writing in the *Christian Century*: "What ought to be preached today? The preaching I feel constrained to has a name: the preaching of Jesus Christ." And I trust that these men meant the preaching of the *whole* gospel of Christ.

And all this because in a strangely naive faith I believe that it was Christ who said, *after* his resurrection: "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth."

Montclair Lutheran, Harold G. Becker.
Denver, Colo.

Those Monday Morning Blues

SIR: Your selective powers were functioning at their highest when you included Gardner Taylor's "They Shall Ask The Way" (February). It was a "stand-out." Ministers, I suppose, like lay people, are not supposed to "enjoy" sermons, but here was a sermon that brought a lift of spirit to one preacher on a weary Monday morning. Let's have more like them.

First Presbyterian, Luther Bostrom.
Nunda, N. Y.

From Scotland

SIR: I am surprised that you should have publised "Wanted: Christian Gamblers"—a sermon that would appear to equate the soldiers dicing for the seamless robe with the figure on the cross. There is here a most elementary confusion of terms. The writer does not seem to be aware of the difference between a "gamble" and a "risk."

Peter Green, author of *Betting and Gambling*, defines a gamble as "an agreement between two parties, whereby the transfer of something of value from one to the other is made dependent on an uncertain event, in such a way that the gain of one party is balanced by the loss of another." It is agreed that the definition does not cover every form of gambling, e.g., lotteries. Still it is as good a definition as any.

In the light of this how can any man seriously say, "The strange man on the cross is making the heroic gamble"? It just doesn't make sense. Who is the loser in this gamble out of whose losses the gainers are enriched? I thought the Man on the cross *gave* his life as a ransom for many. I thought that at Calvary there were no losers. There is a saying attributed to that Man: "I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself." Whatever that may be, it is not a gamble.

One word more. The preacher seemed to enjoy "shocking" us—"a shocking thing for a minister to say," "shocking thing for Christians to hear," and so on. That is kid's stuff. Does he know any new "bad words"? There is something pathetic in the spectacle of a minister setting out to "shock" us. Sorry, we are not shocked—not even amused.

St. Margaret's, W. E. Gladstone-Millar.
Arbroath, Angus, Scotland.

By Aaron N. Meckel

THE LOST ART OF WINNING SOULS

MERTON S. RICE, who for so many years carried on a great evangelistic ministry in Detroit, gives us this incident out of his experience. There was a man in one of his churches with whom he often went fishing. On many a subject minister and parishioner held discussion. One subject alone never came up—a man's relationship to Jesus Christ as Lord and Master, and his consequent loyalty to the Christian church.

In time the young minister was succeeded by another, who promptly pressed upon this man the claims of Christ. But when confronted with the imperial demands of the gospel, the man made reply that they couldn't be so important after all. "Why," said he, "if they had been important, Mr. Rice would have mentioned them. During all the years I knew him he never once brought up the subject." It was a chagrined pastor who went back to his former pastorate and friend to make amends for a tragic oversight. Said the great soul-winner of later years, "We must make our friendships Christian!"

A chief of police in an Indiana city, looking at the wrecks that were brought to his attention, was overheard to say, "The saving of souls is rapidly becoming a lost art in our generation."

A Lost Art?

Perhaps we who are entrusted with the gospel had better face that accusation. Is the winning of souls to Christ becoming a lost art with us? How many of us would agree with Charles H. Spurgeon's declaration, "The gospel enables me to venture great things"? How is it with our churches? Is there a groundswell of dependable growth from month to month and year to year.

One of the outstanding liberal preachers of our generation, not long before his retirement from the active ministry stated in a sermon that were persons actually to become soundly converted in our average run of church we would hardly know how to deal with them!

In the twelfth chapter of his Gospel the evangelist John tells how some of the Greeks came to the disciples say, "Sirs, we would see Jesus." As the heirs and disciples of the great Plato and Aristotle come to Him for the gift of life, the world of the Master is stirred to the depths. In a vision he sees the death he must die and the resurrection from the dead he must undergo that all men may live "after the power of an endless life." The great imperative of evangelism is flung out from the lips of the supreme soul-winner of the ages: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." The mighty Magnet is to be moved toward the filings, that it may draw them.

Believers As Witnesses

Now place the statement of the police chief and the words of Christ side by side: Not "if *ideas* about me are lifted up," but "if I, the Son of God and Redeemer of men, be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me." And then the police chief: "The saving of souls is rapidly becoming a lost art in this generation." One recalls the words that F. W. H. Myers places on the lips of the Apostle Paul:

Only like souls I see the folk thereunder,
Bound who should conquer, slaves who should be kings;
Hearing their one hope with an empty wonder,
Sadly contented in the show of things.

Then with a rush the intolerable craving
Shivers throughout me like a trumpet call.
Oh, to save these, to perish for their saving,
Die for their life, He offered for them all.

Whatever else may be said of the man in pulpit on Sunday morning, let this be said: when the passion for souls, as Jowett calls it, pales from his ministry, he is, to say the least, a shorn Samson just going through the motions. He is no longer a preacher of the Good News, a proclaimer of the Lord and Master who said he came to seek and to save the lost. What has been called the "lost radiance of religion" and the "lost passion for souls" is part and parcel of the same thing.

The church grew and became great in the first place because believers witnessed to the Lord. Early Christianity was brought out in the crucible of experience. Your Peters and Pauls and Marys beheld in their Master a mighty Magnet, and so they lifted him up in living word and deed that he might draw men unto him. You can't better that word in the Acts of the Apostles: "And the Lord added daily to the church such as were saved."

Read again the original documents of our faith and you are convinced that the over-all object of those first disciples was not to build a pretentious church; nor was it to pad membership rolls. Their consuming object was to bear glad witness to the One who had redeemed them from the dregs of sin and unbelief. Thus did the church grow.

And how amazingly simple was the method of Jesus! He took twelve men, the like of ourselves, lived his way into their lives, filled them to overflowing with his redemptive concern for others, and sent them out to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel" saying "Ye are my witnesses." So did the church grow.

How is it then that the winning of souls has become a lost art in many places? Is it that we have lost the art of "pleading with men"? Is it that we have so professionalized our witness that we forget that Christianity first burst upon the world as a lay apostolate? Can we no longer say with William Carey, "My business is to be a Christian; I coble shoes for a living"? Or with the blessed Paul, "I am persuaded that nothing—in heaven or earth—can separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ"? Crucial questions, these, knocking at our heart's door, asking for a reply.

A Redemptive Ministry

James S. Stewart reminds us that when Henry Ward Beecher began his ministry he was disappointed by the absence of results and an almost total lack of response. "The chariot wheels dragged; there were no signs of an awakening; the indifferent remained sunk in their indifference." Then one day the thought gripped him: "There was a reason *why*, when the apostles preached, they succeeded, and I will find it out, if it is to be found out." The youthful Beecher probed deep into apostolic methods and sources of power. He found that these men preached the gospel not as a set of intellectual opinions but as the won-

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derful deeds and acts of God for man's salvation. Then his ministry became redemptive with results for God.

Perhaps we modern "craftsmen" have become so obsessed with peripheral matters—social reform in the abstract, raising budgets, forming endless committees where we "spend hours to pass minutes," the whirl of social organizations—that we have too much lost sight of our primary task of witnessing.

I wonder about that when I see religious sects capitalizing on our lukewarmness. Just take a look at the Jehovah's Witnesses on the streets of our cities, offering their many pamphlets to the passer-by, and with a smile! There comes to mind the Mormon elevator boy in St. Paul, Minnesota, who tried to convert me to his faith. A pastor-friend says that whenever a Mormon family moves into his community you can feel their missionary fervor for five miles in every direction. Yes let it be said that when the Congregationalists, the Methodists, the Baptists, the Presbyterians no longer ply their evangelistic witness, then the religious sects take it up.

Even as the first Christians were driven abroad by persecution, they witnessed to the pagan world of the Lord of Life. Persecuted but witnessing! When the church was great the winning of souls to the Redeemer was a consummate art.

Retrieving the Lost Art

The second proposition seems equally clear: the church will again become a strong moral force in modern society when as individual Christians we retrieve the lost art of winning souls. That will mean, brother pastor, that you and I will refuse to stand on "the slippery floor of a popular pulpit," as Alexander Whyte calls it, and like Baxter will preach as "a dying man to dying men." We will be consumed with one passion, to lift up Jesus Christ unto the salvation of men. It will further mean that we will spread this contagion of soul-winning to those with whom we worship from Sunday to Sunday. "No man is ever really saved," said Moody, "until he has won at least one other person to Jesus Christ."

And the qualifications for an effective soul-winner, whether in pulpit or pew? First of all, you must have a "story" of your own to tell. Above all else, men must see evidence of the power of God working in your life. Go out and talk about yourself and you become an insufferable bore. Go and tell another what Jesus Christ means to you and you become an irresistible magnet. Yes, have a story to tell, and then tell it in your own idiom.

> Tell me the story simply,
> As to a little child;
> For I am weak and weary,
> And helpless and defiled.

Dare to speak up for your Master. Help to break the conspiracy of silence that hangs like a fog over the modern church. In a day when the communist and the secularist are shrilling their wares, shall the Christian be be silent?

Then, remember that in the winning of souls, love counts for much more than argument. Human souls are loved rather than argued into the Kingdom of God. Said Spurgeon to his students: "Do not go about the world with your fist doubled up for fighting, carrying a theological revolver in the leg of your trousers!"

We who are entrusted with the Good News for men today, must have the imaginative insight of the Boy Scout who was administering artificial respiration to a poor drunk. "Son, it's not worth your trouble," said the derelict. But the little fellow replied, "But I'm not thinking of the man you are, but of the man you're going to be."

There comes to mind the prayer list my own pastor-father used to carry about with him. Whenever he heard of some sheep of the fold that had morally strayed from the path or was in some dire strait, he would enter the name upon that list. And often he would mention before God, on his knees at family prayer, the names of these people. There is that memorable reply of George W. Truett when he was offered the presidency of Baylor University: "I have found the shepherd heart, and I am content."

Finally, the way to acquire this lost art we have been discussing is to practice it. When Dwight L. Moody was asked the "how" of soul-winning by a hesitant Christian he replied, "Start right where you are. The main thing is to *begin*." Therein, I am persuaded, lies the strength of Protestantism in the southland. Whatever else may be said of it, Protestantism south of the Mason and Dixon line is evangelical to the core, and is insistent that new converts go out and bring in others to the Lord of Life and the church community. We need to observe in our modern evangelism the sound method of Frank Laubach among illiterates: each one (who has been taught) teach another.

Evangelism: a Task for Today

We fully realize the wider implications of the evangelistic task for our day. Each and every kingdom of this world must ultimately be brought into subjection to the lordship of Christ. But the place for us to begin is at the very core and center of the church—our church, our people! To use a good Quaker word, God must put a new *concern* in our souls for the salvation of our lost fellow men. If Kefauver and Kinsey reports mean anything at all, it is that our modern society has gone to seed at the crucial point of the characters of individual men and women.

Let men hearing us, in our present-day pulpits, say what the students of Edinburgh said about the ministry of Alexander Whyte at St. George's: "I remember how one of us coming out of that church one day said: 'Well, till hearing Whyte I never realized that paradox of St. Paul, I—yet not I.'" And again, according to George Adam Smith, "it was the Spirit of the Lord which we felt pouring through him."

In the end, it will not be the worldly honors we have won that will bring deepest satisfaction. It will be the souls who through our loving concern and interest were led into the joy and glory of the Christian life that will constitute the jewels and the gems in our crown.

For Holy Week and Easter

Easter shows that our world is not old and dying but living and renewable. The open tomb and the risen Christ declare to mankind that the spirit of God cannot be imprisoned by the evil of men.

We need to illuminate life with faith, glorify it with goodness, and enrich it with service.

The weight of unforgiven sin is heavy and unnecessary. No Christian need carry it.

In troubled days Christians need to clasp their hands in prayer and then open them in dedicated service.

God can do things for us only when we release our grip on things we should surrender to him.

Our crosses are our opportunities. Through them God can use us. Our Good Fridays teach us to serve through suffering.

The Christian is to be a candlelighter in a darkened time. It does not matter how unimportant we may be nor how deep the gloom. We can all light candles of love, courage, and faith to brighten the ways of men.—*Charles M. Crowe in* Sanctuary, 1952.

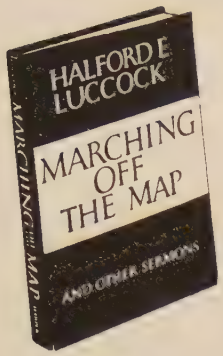
An Easter Hymn

"He lives! He lives!" the angels said,
"Seek him no more among the dead."
He lives, who once for sinners died,
Christ Jesus, he, the Crucified.
All hail, all hail, thou living One!
All hail, all hail th' Eternal Son!

Rejoice! Rejoice! He lives today!
The Christ of God, who leads the way!
We turn, we turn our hearts to thee,
Who comest back from Calvary.
O Savior Lord, lead on, we pray,
Till death's dark night shall turn to day.

Hark! Hark! I hear his servants sing:
"O Death! O Death! Where is thy sting?
Where is thy victory now, O Grave,
Since he arose from death to save?"
Thanks be to God, through Christ our Lord.
All hail, all hail, thou living Word!

JOHN W. SHACKFORD.



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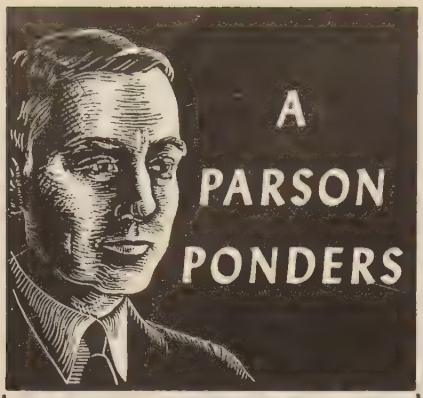

Human nature provides a fascinating field of study, and the question of why people behave as they do never ceases to be interesting. Like a famous actress, the genus homo is always unpredictable.

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"More than a Business— an Institution"

Pulpit Patter

By Morton S. Enslin

Concerning 'Acts of God'

I AM NOT greatly enamored of the wise and discerning pronouncements not infrequently attributed by fond clerical daddies to their offspring of tender years. In fact, the preceding sentence is a near-classic example of litotes, for I have come to loathe such quotations with a perfect loathing. They are obnoxious in private conversation; from the pulpit they are atrocious and an outrage which no self-respecting congregation should be forced to endure. As peddled forth, they rarely have the effluvium of the nursery—which may be all to the good—but generally bear the all too clear signs of clerical alteration, in part to make the profound insight immediately applicable, in part to indicate the high I.Q. the reverend papa has been able to produce.

Now having delivered myself of a pet hate—of long standing but recently rendered acute—I shall proceed to establish, if that be necessary, my placid inconsistency by mentioning one such as recounted to me by a former colleague. His ten-year-old son had just returned from Sunday school. In the midst of dinner he suddenly blurted out: "I love Jesus, but I hate God." The resulting conversation revealed that youngster as more sinned against than sinning. The lesson had had to do with the crucifixion, and apparently the teacher had had a thoroughly orthodox upbringing. Unfortunately she had succeeded, as have many a theologian and pulpiteer, in making Jesus very attractive and gracious—but at the utter expense of the One who had sent him.

Many times through the years I have thought of that story as I have seen examples of the way we have unwittingly contrived to make the Almighty repellent and cruel. Recently the world has been thrilled by the simple story of Captain Carlsen of the Flying Enterprise. One element in the saga was dreadfully out of tune. When the ship finally sank and her heroic master was safe on shore, the first thing he had to do, before the insurance companies could act, was to go before a court and swear that it was an "act of God." Now while the world hush-breathed for news, not only of the rescue of the captain and his brave companion but of their success in seeing their efforts rewarded by the ship safe in drydock, everything human had been done—including many prayers—to prevent if possible this "act of God."

Is it any wonder that people are confused, that they find difficulty in adding up the score? All the hellish things which cannot be thrust upon the shoulders of men—hurricanes, earthquakes, cities leveled by fire or flood or ravaged by pestilence—we smugly style "acts of God." Nor can we excuse ourselves by the easy out of saying that this is the language of the law and business. It is such, of course; but why? Simply because the pulpits have sounded it forth through the years as orthodox theology. "Shall evil befall a city, and Jehovah hath not done it?" How well we have learned that lesson!

It may be possible for some men to see a fairy daughter torn away from her loving parents by disease or a speeding auto and to regard it as an "act of God" and to seek to comfort the parents (Job's comforters too must have been worse than his boils) by easy words about an all-wise and all-loving Father calling his little daughter home to be a sunbeam in highest heaven. I cannot do it, and such words seem to me near blasphemy, for such acts seem to me very far removed from the "will of God"—at least of the God I worship. Regularly in our prayers for recovery for those who have momentarily escaped death in the airplane crash or the tragic holocaust or the less spectacular crisis we couple on the phrase, "if it by thy good will." Thus if the doctors are unsuccessful, recovery was not "thy good will."

Too long, it seems to me, we have continued to mouth these cruel old shibboleths, to be so fearful lest, if we free ourselves from the magic and superstition that have lingered through the centuries in orthodox-sounding religion, we lose our faith, that we have really lost our God, or at least our respect for him. Did God send that last gale which rolled the Flying Enterprise over when she was almost safe in port? Did God send the fog which resulted in the crash of the airliner over Elizabeth, New Jersey? Is it "God's good will" that a young mother die in childbirth to leave a heartsick and frightened husband

(Continued on page 23)

Sermon Summary

It Was Cold

A Lenten Meditation

Now the servants and officers had made a charcoal fire. . . . Peter also was with them, standing and warming himself.—John 18:18.

AYE, it was cold! The day, friendly and warm, had withdrawn and the night had come on with cold stars. The men standing about the fire were officers and servants. They were strangers to Peter. Their faces masked by the fire possessed a strange ghoulishness about the eyes. He felt alienated from the comradely eyes of Jesus. Across the fire was the kinsman of the high priest's servant whose ear he had deftly sheared from his head. Peter shifted uneasily, while a neutral fire lifted its flames to warm the hands of offender and offended. It is not often that events conspire against a man with such embarrassment. A gripping chill seemed to rise from the fire and seize his heart with fingers of frost. Aye, it was cold!

A fire of coals! Perhaps his hands trembled as he extended them to the warmth. He vigorously rubbed them to rouse circulation. There is a faint suggestion that his hands are writhing. Strange that his hands should be so cold, rough-reddened as they are from many winds! Many a night on Galilee his hands, wet from the nets and fish, had grown hot in the winds. Stripped to the girdle, he had not felt the cold. But now he was chilled and the fire did not warm him. Stir up the fire? Heap on more coals? No use: Peter will still be cold. He is the victim of a moral chill that congeals his spontaneous heart and renders him numb to moral danger. He will soon take cruel and faithless words on his lips. He will deny his Lord.

Inner Warmth

O world! You may kindle a thousand fires and huddle near them, even thrust your hands into them to be burned, yet your hearts will be cold if you nourish in them denials of Christ. Such a coldness exceeds that of uttermost space. It is a living chill, with enough warmth therein to make the experience painful. But if your hearts remain loyal, never fearing to own him, the Divine Spirit, breathing upon them, may then blow up some live sparks of true understanding within thy being. When such fires burn inwardly, may we not smother them in the ashes of our own earthly thoughts.

Later, Simon and the others go a-fishing, thinking that their "business lay netwards." Through a cold night they caught nothing. But when morning came they saw a Figure on the shore. They recognize him, and Simon tightens his fisher's cloak and plunges in over the nets. "One would have liked to see him swim those hundred yards, and stagger to his knees upon the beach" (Ruskin). Shivering and amazed, Simon sits by the coal fire, surely thinking of that other coal fire when he was colder. Across the fire comes the question, "Simon, lovest thou me?" The answer: "Yea Lord, thou knowest that I love thee!"

It is thus that winter in the heart passes into spring.—*R. Dale LeCount, Sixth Avenue Presbyterian, Birmingham, Ala.*

Enslin

(Continued from page 22)

alone to the task of trying to make a home for himself and the fruit of their dear love? For me the answer is definitely No, and I refuse to sully the name and picture of the One I worship by ascribing to him and his direction acts which, if he be worthy of the name we have been taught to call him, are as intolerable to him as they are to his children.

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SINCE 1900

Pulpit Paragraphs

Contributed by Readers of The Pulpit

• *Healing Action*

WHILE traveling through the strip mine section of Illinois I saw hideously torn and jagged areas where monster machines had removed meager coal deposits from the bosom of the earth and disgorged the unwanted debris. It was a forlorn and hopeless sight. But, when one looked more closely he could see a fringe growth of straggly, slender weeds not unlike the first down which appears on the chin of a youth. In spite of the ravaging actions of human beings God in His wisdom slowly but surely had begun His healing action. So it is in the course of human experience. The sins of men may rend and gash God's fair green earth. Nevertheless, God's healing action is ceaseless. In His own time He heals and makes whole again.—*James H. Misheff, Camden Methodist, Camden, Ohio.*

• *Captain Carlson*

WHY is it that the whole world has looked with interest at a captain of an insignificant freighter whose ship was disabled by an Atlantic hurricane. Is he a different man than he was when his neighbors hardly noticed him walking the streets of a little town in New Jersey? All he did was stay on his ship alone after he sent all of his crewmen to safety. The reason why the world acclaims him is because of the magnificent tradition of the sea where a man in scorn of self takes upon himself his responsibility and sticks to the end. Captain Carlson is not merely a man by himself who stayed on his ship. He is a symbol to the whole world of how a man meets and overcomes catastrophe—by giving up his life that he may find it.—*Ensworth Reisner, First Methodist, Milwaukee, Wis.*

• *The Source Never Runs Dry*

GOD in his role as Father is the source of the universe and all that is in it. If you do not believe this amounts to something significant simply consider the staggering size of that universe over which our faith asserts God the Father has control. Someone recently made this ingenious calculation: "Suppose the earth were reduced to the size of the period at the end of a printed sentence; that is, to a diameter of only one-fiftieth of an inch. Suppose everything else in the universe was strung proportionately on that microscopic scale with the earth the size of a period. The sun would be 19½ feet away. The nearest star would be 1,005 miles away. The furthest galaxy of stars would be almost 82 billion miles away." These would be the dimensions of the universe were the earth reduced to pinpoint size. So when we speak of God, the Father, we are thinking of the Originator of this vast universe. From him come stars and atoms, mortal creatures and immortal ideas, system upon system of being in endless profusion. He is the Source that never runs dry. Billions of years back he was sustaining the universe, and for billions of years to come we can safely assume he will be doing the same thing.—*E. K. Roberts, Merriam Park Presbyterian, St. Paul, Minn.*

Pulpit Calendar

Apr. 6—Palm Sunday.
Apr. 6-12—Holy Week.
Apr. 10—Maundy Thursday.
Apr. 11—Good Friday.
Apr. 12—Easter Eve.
Apr. 13—Easter.
Apr. 20—First Sunday after Easter.
Apr. 27—Second Sunday after Easter. National Christian College Sunday.
May 4—Third Sunday after Easter.
May 4-11—National Family Week.
May 11—Fourth Sunday after Easter. Festival of the Christian Home (Mother's Day).
May 18—Fifth Sunday after Easter. Rural Life Sunday.
May 22—Ascension Day.
May 25—Sunday after Ascension.
May 30—Memorial Day.
June 1—Whitsunday (Pentecost). Christian Unity Sunday.
June 8—Trinity Sunday. Sovereign's Birthday (United Kingdom, Canada, Australia).
June 14—Flag Day (USA).
June 15—Second Sunday after Pentecost. Children's Sunday.
June 22—Third Sunday after Pentecost.
June 29—Fourth Sunday after Pentecost. St. Peter and St. Paul, Apostles. Nature Sunday.

SEASONS: Lent, Eastertide, Whitsuntide.

ALTAR COLORS: Lent, violet; Maundy Thursday, white; Good Friday, black; Easter Eve, black or bare; Easter and Eastertide, white; Whitsuntide, red and white; Pentecost, red; June 8 and 15, white; 22, green; 29, green or red.

(Pulpit Calendar lists dates in the calendar of the Christian year and other observances of nationwide or denominational significance.)

• *Change Comes from Inside*

I RAN across a story in a current best seller recently. It told about a barbers' association convention in some big hotel. As a publicity stunt, someone went out to the city's skid row and picked up the sorriest-looking drunken bum he could find and brought him to the hotel. They gave him a bath and a shave and a haircut, decked him out from spats to topper in the most elegant manner, and transformed him into a sartorially perfect specimen, as fine-looking a gentleman as ever was seen.

The hotel manager was as interested as anyone, and when the convention ended he approached the erstwhile bum and said: "Now that you've been made over into a perfect picture of a gentleman, I'm going to go a step farther and give you a chance to start all over again and will back you in another hotel that I operate. When do you want to start?"

The man said, "Suppose we make it at eight tomorrow morning?"

Eight o'clock came the next morning, then noon, then dinner time, and no signs of the man. Following a hunch, the manager went to the district where they had picked up the bum, and eventually found him—dead drunk, sleeping on some old newspapers in an alley, his fancy clothes now rumpled and soiled. Said the manager: "I was certainly disillusioned. The barbers may be able to clean a man up on the outside, but you can never make anything out of a man until you also change him from the inside."—*Herman J. Kregel, Post Chaplain, U. S. Military Academy, West Point, N. Y.*

• *'All Things Work Together'*

ISAIAH showed God as caring for Israel as an eagle cares for its young. While they need it the parent feeds and protects them, but when they are grown old enough to fly and seek their own food, the old bird stirs up the nest, pushes them out and makes them use their wings. It hovers over them, and comes under and carries them as they need it; but they are forced to learn to use their own power and to rely on themselves. To the fledglings it is doubtless a fearful thing to be pushed out of the nest,

Where It Belongs

Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.—Proverbs 20:1.

When it comes to holding liquor
Most folks are forced to toddle;
I have yet to see a person
Hold it better than a bottle.
C. W. VANDENBERGH.

We are being flooded with quatrains—both humorous and profound. Samples of each will appear in our next issue—The Editors.

but it would be far worse for them to be always bound there. So God forces us to the disciplines that are necessary to make us strong, even though they seem severe and dreadful. We may either accept and profit by them, or we may rebel and fret against them, and die. But God hovers over those who love him, and bears them on his own wings when they need it, that they may grow up toward the stature and the strength of mature sons of God. We may never be independent of him, but we may become able to do many things and, working together with him, may the better appreciate his purposes, his goodness and his power. We may prove in our experience that "to them that love God all things work together for good."—*H. V. Clark, Clearwater, Kan.*

Hymns for Today

By Hoover Rupert

Palm Sunday

Materna.

O Jesus, Thou who wert received
With shouts, and song, and praise
By throngs whose eyes had not perceived
Thy teachings, life and ways,
Help us to glimpse Thy light's full gleam,
The Christian life to view,
And guide us with its radiant stream
Thy word and works to do!

Save us from following after those
Who strewed the palms and sang,
But later joined Thy jealous foes
In Pilate's court, that rang
With cries of hatred, fear, and scorn,
And called to crucify
Thy loving life, Messiah-born,
Whom God did glorify.

We look to Thee as Lord and King,
Our Leader, Guide, and Stay;
To Thee our loud hosannas sing
On this Thy holy day;
But Jesus, how we need to know
Thy Kingdom's way and will!
Give us Thy word, and Savior show
That Thou art with us still. Amen.

Easter

St. Agnes.

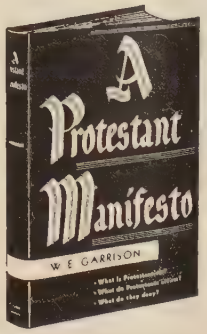
O glorious morn of Easter Day,
In sunlight streaming bright
We catch thy hope, thy radiant ray
Of vision, faith, and light!

O empty cross against the sky
On Calvary's hill art bare,
The Christ left there on thee to die
Lived on, a crown to wear!

O empty tomb, thy hopeful sight
Brings courage and new breath;
Symbol of day o'ercoming night,
Life triumphs over death!

O risen Christ, our Lord and King,
In this thy holy place,
Our grateful thanks and praise we sing
For God's redeeming grace. Amen.

Timely and Usable



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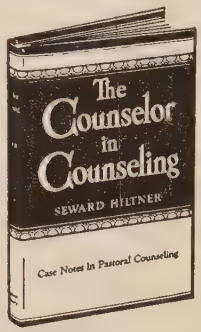

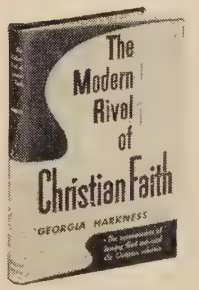

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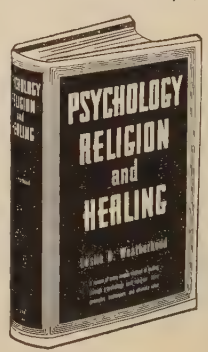

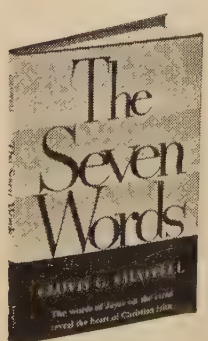

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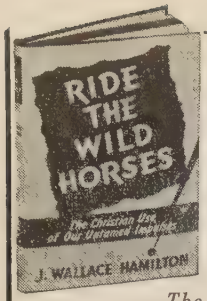

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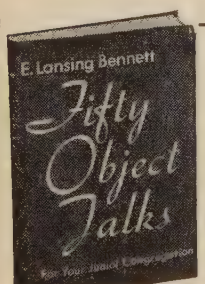

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Ministry of Music

By Ernest K. Emurian

Anniversaries in 1952

SUNDAY evening services may well be devoted to commemoration of the anniversaries of composers and hymn writers which occur in a particular year. During 1952 the hymns and tunes of these men should be called to the attention of congregations the world over:

This year is the 100th anniversary of the death of the Irish poet Thomas Moore (1779-1852), who wrote "Come, ye disconsolate." It is also the 75th anniversary of the passing of Sir Henry Baker (1821-77), author of "The King of Love my shepherd is" and composer of the hymn tune *Stephanos;* and of William Bathurst (1796-1877), author of "O for a Faith that will not shrink."

By far the most notable poet to be remembered this year was not a hymn writer. But his five four-line stanzas have immortalized his name; so we should not ignore the 100th anniversary of the death of John Howard Payne (1791-1852), author of "Home, Sweet Home." American have long since forgotten his record as a brilliant actor and playwright, and the story of the subsequent financial difficulties which drove him to accept a position as United States consul in Tunis, North Africa, as the appointee of President Tyler. Too few recall his homeless wanderer's death in 1852, his burial in Tunisian soil, his disinterment 31 years later and final burial in the Georgetown cemetery with highest honors. But who can ever forget the simple moving stanzas he wrote in Paris in 1822, during his 31st year, for the opera "Clari, or Maid of Milan"? Set to a Sicilian air by Sir Henry Bishop, the song was an immediate success, earning for its publishers an enormous profit, and for its author only $250.

Musicians will be commemorating the 125th anniversary of the death of Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827), second of the "Big B's" of the musical world, coming between Bach and Brahms. His 38 sonatas and 9 symphonies still stand unchallenged as masterpieces and insure for their creator a place among the immortals. Born in Germany, given the best instruction his parents could provide, Beethoven wrote with a freedom "unimagined by his predecessors." Before his death in Vienna, 138 works had come from his pen for all forms of vocal and instrumental music. To our knowledge, he never wrote a hymn tune. However, the devotional character of much of his music made "adaptations" possible, and today's hymnals are richer for the tunes arranged from his compositions: *Sardis, Dulcetta, Germany,* and *Hymn to Joy* (from the final choral movement of his final (ninth) symphony).

Other composers to whom recognition is due are known to fame for one or two outstanding hymn tunes each. William Croft (1678-1727), doctor of music from Oxford University, could well rejoice that 225 years after his death Christians are still singing his finest hymn tune, *St. Anne* ("O God, our help in ages past"). This tune would have delighted the heart of John Calvin, under whose guidance Louis Bourgeois had composed *Old Hundredth.* The Genevan reformer insisted on tunes in which there was only one note for each syllable.

In 1952 we should commemorate also the 75th anniversary of the death of John Stockton (1813-77), Methodist minister, coworker of Moody and Sankey, author and composer of "Come, every soul by sin oppressed"; and of Alexander Reinagle (1799-1877) composer of the tune *St. Peter* ("In Christ there is no east or west").

Fifty years ago both George William Warren and Henry Stephen Cutler died. Warren (1828-1902) is famous for his stirring tune *National Hymn,* composed for "God of our fathers, whose almighty hand." Cutler (1824-1902) is remembered for the tune *All Saints, New,*" composed for Bishop Heber's St. Stephen's Day hymn, "The Son of God goes forth to war."

Eucharist

Thou art the vine
And this the vintage of Thy love,
Crushed in the cruel press of sin.
A bitter agony to thee;
A dear remembrance to me.

We are the branches:
May love ripen all our deeds.
So shall we from out the press
Vintage worthy of the Vine pour—
Our love's redeeming wine.

RALPH SUTTON.

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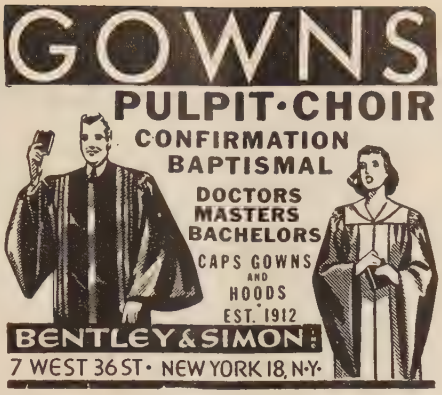
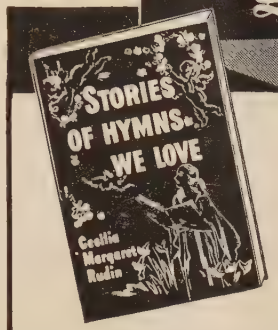


Stories of Hymns We Love



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Vigorous pointers to Protestant growth in worship, thought, and living by *Chad Walsh, Nels Ferré, Robert E. Cushman,* and *David J. Maitland. $2.00*

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The Claim of Jesus Christ

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"This is a thought-provoking book which succeeds well in relating the deed of Christ to the need of man, not in theological terms but in terms of the daily life of men and women."—*William R. Guffick* in *The Pastor. $1.25*

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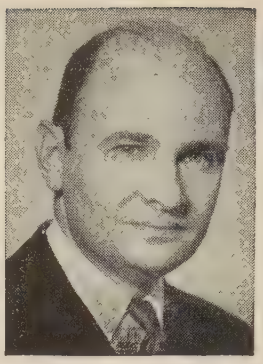


Come Let Us Worship

By Clarence Seidenspinner

Worship as an Art

LAST month we discussed the need for artistry in divine worship. We explored a service which broke down at the point of its art and left some worshipers disquieted and unhappy. This resulted, not from lack of preparation by the pastor in his prayer or sermon, but rather from the fact that the service did not have a good design or a fine sense of liturgical continuity. At the end of the discussion we raised the question: What are some of the factors that make for the best artistry in worship?

1. A service must have a sound design. No leader of worship can put a liturgy together on the basis of his personal whims. The fact that it gives him a good warm feeling, for example, to start his sermon after a soprano has soared to the musical heavens on the wings of her own angelic music, doesn't mean that this personal fancy makes for a good design in worship. One who puts together a service ought to have in mind a fundamental pattern for public worship. Several such patterns have been made available in recent years. Whether he uses one or another of these may not make much difference. He may evolve a pattern of his own because worship is still in a nascent period, but the design he finally chooses must be sound in its development of a fundamental liturgical idea. Then when a sound design has been found, let it be kept to and not changed by pastoral whim simply because a minister may have a private urge to sing a hymn or to tell an anecdote at the point of the prayer or some other moment in the service.

2. A good service will have fluidity of movement. It will flow as gently but as relentlessly as a quiet stream of water. One movement will emerge easily out of the preceding movement. Worshipers will hardly recognize the structural spaces in the service because the fluidity will carry them along in the fundamental experience of fellowship with God. This is the basic purpose of divine worship. When the transitions are awkward, the instruments of worship intrude and the attention of the worshiper is directed from God to the awkwardness in the celebration of the service.

The abrupt rising and sitting of the congregation often make for awkwardness in the transitions. Certainly it is foolish to ask the congregation to rise for any short item such as the Doxology or the Gloria. If the Doxology and the Gloria are going to be sung, and the people are going to rise for them, this congregational act ought to be done in connection with some other liturgical expression that calls for a standing congregation. An improvement of many services can also be made through careful organ work in tying certain portions of the service together.

3. The service that has the best artistry is one of dramatic unity. The major theme ought to dominate the liturgy on a given day. Hymns and prayers and anthems, Scripture reading and sermon ought to tie together if the congregation is not to be confused. By sitting down with the choirmaster to choose proper anthems, by selecting his hymns carefully and by doing everything that he can to secure thematic unity, the minister will be rewarded in terms of the dramatic unity of his service.

4. The service which has dramatic emphasis is likely to have good artistry. All its major phases or movements ought to build up to the climax as it seeks to emphasize a particular aspect of the major theme of the day. In a threefold pattern of worship, for example, such as adoration, communion and dedication, emphasis can be achieved at the final point of adoration, in prayer and sermon during the second movement of communion, and in the final thrilling hymn at the point of dedication. All this must have careful preparation and thought, however, if the emphasis is to be sound.

5. A good service calls for a minimum of congregational action. People are only confused and irritated if they are called upon constantly to rise and sit. There will be none of this type of confusion in a service that is well planned and in whose movement the major experiences of worship are well grouped. There is no good reason why a congregation should rise more than three times during a service.

6. A service which fulfills the best standards of artistry will, of course, have a hearty, intelligent and beautiful reading by all the celebrants concerned. This calls for careful preparation in voice work and expression on the part of ministers and choristers. When these factors are given adequate consideration, worship becomes an art.

ROUNDUP

Books in Brief

PROTESTANT BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION. By **Bernard Ramm.** W. A. Wilde, $1.75. This textbook of hermeneutics is an intelligently conservative presentation and defense of the system of biblical interpretation Protestantism once followed. Unfortunately, it is not presented as history.—*Garland Evans Hopkins, Managing Editor, The Pulpit.*

★FANNY CROSBY. By **Basil Miller.** Zondervan, $1.50. The best biography of the world's most prolific hymn and gospel-song writer since Jackson's *Fanny Crosby's Story of Ninety Four Years* was published in 1915, the year of the poet's death. Written simply and interestingly, this volume throws light on the poetic genius and Christian experience of a very remarkable woman. Friend of presidents and leaders of state, she twice addressed the Congress of the United States. She was recognized as a poet of rare skill and artistry long before she penned her first hymn, but the more than 5,000 religious poems she wrote are sufficient to establish her as one of the nation's most gifted women. Although this biography is by no means exhaustive (the complete story still remains to be written) the preacher will find here a wealth of information, illustrations and hymn stories which will be helpful. Since this reviewer's great-grandfather (Albert Rullifson, founder of New York's famous Bowery Mission, where Fanny Crosby was inspired to write "Rescue the Perishing"), grandparents and parents were friends of Fanny Crosby, it has been a matter of personal concern that too few ministers are acquainted with her life and work. This brief volume affords a good beginning.—*Ernest K. Emurian, Elm Avenue Methodist, Portsmouth, Va.*

★LIVE WITH YOUR EMOTIONS. By **Hazen G. Werner.** Abingdon-Cokesbury, $2.50. "Understand Your Emotions . . . and Handle Them" is the jacket's subtitle. Another small-size book trailing the trend of wedding psychology and religion, it plays fair with both. Not a great book but a good one. Contains some good illustrations and many good sermon ideas, but will put the preacher on the trail of many more from his own experience. Has no pat solutions to all of life's problems, but definitely does point the way.—*Herman J. Kregel, Post Chaplain, U. S. Military Academy, West Point, N. Y.*

★A PRIMER FOR CHRISTIAN LIFE. By **Rolfe Lanier Hunt.** Tidings (1908 Grand Ave., Nashville, Tenn.), 25 cents. In this common-sense guide to many phases of living for adults and young people, a layman has written a series of short essays that any preacher will find good source material and excellent sermon starters. It is also a valuable book to put in the hands of average Christian youth and adult church members.—*Garland Evans Hopkins, Managing Editor, The Pulpit.*

REDISCOVERING THE BIBLE. By **Bernhard W. Anderson.** Association Press, $3.50. The author's primary interest is in "the unfolding drama of God's dealings with men." He declares that history has meaning "because it is embraced within the time-span of God's redemptive purpose." With this thesis in mind, he traces the drama of the divine-human encounter through the ups and downs of Israel's history to the appearance of Jesus the Christ as the "effective agent" of redemption. In the death and resurrection episodes he sees "embodied God's intention to reconcile men to their Creator by going to the Cross of Calvary." "The Resurrection . . . was the climactic moment in the biblical drama," bringing to fulfillment the promise of the covenant first made with Abraham. This book may well have the effect of stimulating those who read it to a renewed and zealous commitment to biblical preaching.—*Stiles Lessly, First Congregational, De Kalb, Ill.*

★★BRIGHT IS THE SHAKEN TORCH. By **Arthur A. Cowan.** Scribners, $3.00. Twenty-one refreshing, original sermons by the pastor of Inverleith Church, Edinburgh. Well developed, splendidly illustrated, clearly outlined. The intriguing titles ("The Haunted House"; "Enjoying the Challenge of Troubled Days"; "When One Door Closes Another Door Opens") are not mere springboards into unknown waters but doors to understanding and revelation.—*Ernest K. Emurian, Elm Avenue Methodist, Portsmouth, Va.*

LET GO AND LET GOD. By **Albert E. Cliffe.** Prentice-Hall, $2.50. This book represents an oversimplification of the Christian way of life. The entire volumne is a chatty re-emphasis of the "magic of believing" formula, based on nothing but the bootstrap method of getting the essential faith. Just believe. For some people, a positive attitude is their principal deficiency and this book may help the naive among them to become positive persons. However, as with all such books, there is also the possibility of an aftermath of cynicism if the naive reader ever is forced by misfortune to attempt a reasonable reconciliation of such a cure-all faith with the grim requirements of real life.—*Virgil A. Kraft, Methodist Chaplain, University of Chicago.*

THE SECRET OF PULPIT POWER THROUGH THEMATIC CHRISTIAN PREACHING. By **Simon Blocker,** Eerdmans (Grand Rapids), $3.00. The author is professor of practical theology at Western Theological Seminary, Holland, Mich. Thematic preaching "expresses its essential spiritual message in a single sentence at the close of a brief introduction. The rest of the sermon . . . is the development . . . of that one . . . idea." The purpose of the theme is to keep the preacher from roaming, and how some of us need to be tethered to a theme!—*C. Willard Fetter, First E.U.B., Akron, Ohio.*

THE BIBLE STORY FOR BOYS AND GIRLS (NEW TESTAMENT). By **Walter Russell Bowie.** Abingdon-Cokesbury, $2.50. In the simple and chaste style familiar from his other books, Walter Russell Bowie writes again for boys and girls. In years to come when they have grown older they will be thankful that so able a scholar wrote especially for them. Older people, dipping into this volume, will find here living water for themselves. This beautiful volume is illustrated with 19 color plates and 20 black-and-white decorations by Stephani and Edward Godwin.—*Hampton Adams, Union Avenue Christian, St. Louis, Mo.*

FOUNDATIONS OF THE FAITH. Edited by **David J. Fant.** Revell, $2.50. Those who are seeking the fundamentalist viewpoint in regard to the foundations of the faith will find these clearly and succinctly stated in the dozen chapters of this book. The twelve contributors are top-flight authors and spokesmen for the conservative theological viewpoint, and they present their convictions well.—*Joseph S. Johnston, Epworth Methodist, Norfolk, Va.*

ESTATE OF GLORY. By **Thomas Anderson.** Tupper & Love, Atlanta, $2.75. This book will not only supply a lift to a man's preaching, but will provide some pertinent, fresh ideas for his sermons. It contains 52 thoughts, each reflecting the feats of courageous living which the average person is performing day after day. Each thought is prefaced by a Scripture verse. It is the kind of inspirational book which would make a fine gift for some faithful member of the church and could be used as an opening devotional meditation for official board and church organizational meetings.—*Paul E. Turk, Euclid Avenue Methodist, Oak Park, Ill.*

JESUS AND THE HIDDEN BIBLE. By **Joseph Hayyim Krimsky.** Philosophical Library, $2.75. The contention of this 77-page discourse is that while Jesus' debt to the Old Testament is generally recognized, the extent to which his thinking was influenced by the Jewish apocryphal writings is not so widely known nor sufficiently recognized. Many of Jesus' ideas and doctrines about angels and demons, hell and paradise, the Messiah, the Day of Judgment and the Kingdom of Heaven, as well as some of his ethical teachings, are traced by the author to this source.—*George H. Orser, Fairmount Avenue Methodist, Richmond, Va.*

(★★★★You can't afford to be without it; ★★★Unusually valuable to the preacher; ★★Above average in its field; ★A good buy; No star, depends on your taste and need.)

Books Preachers Are Reading

February	March	This Month	An analysis based on reports from leading religious booksellers and from the reading of the Pulpit's distinguished editorial associates and book reviewers.
	1	1	**A Man Called Peter.** *Catherine Marshall. McGraw,* $3.50
	2	2	**Questions People Ask.** *Robert J. McCracken. Harper* $2.50
9	6	3	**The Seven Words.** *Clovis G. Chappel. Abingdon-Cokesbury,* $1.00
1	4	4	**The Life We Prize.** *Elton Trueblood. Harper,* $2.50
	9	5	**Wake Up or Blow Up.** *Frank C. Laubach. Revell,* $2.00
	3	6	**The Interpreter's Bible.** *Vol. VII. Abingdon-Cokesbury,* $8.75
	5	7	**The Practise of Evangelism.** *Bryan Green. Scribner,* $3.00
	7	8	**By the Way: An Autobiography.** *Francis J. McConnell. Abingdon-Cokesbury* $3.50
5	10	9	**Communism, Democracy and Catholic Power.** *Paul Blanchard. Beacon Press,* $3.50
2	8	10	**Rufus Jones Speaks to Our Times** *Edited by Harry Emerson Fosdick. Macmillan,* $4.00

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

THE PROFOUND national concern over widespread corruption in our government exploded in Chicago with such an awakening as this city has never known. The newspapers for many weeks have kept the subject on their front pages, revealing the worst kinds of skullduggery in state, county and city bureaucracies. Public opinion is focused upon two major scandals—(1) the surreptitious and illegal channeling of 25 millions pounds of horsemeat into the retail market of hotels, restaurants and homes, and (2) the discovery of phantom names on the public payroll and phantom jobs paying good salaries to real persons. Under (1), bribed public inspectors have confessed their guilt. Under (2), the whole patronage system, involving both political parties, has been exposed as unspeakably corrupt. At this writing, the legal process of indictments and trial is just getting under way. The law-enforcement officers are all beneficiaries of the bipartisan patronage machines which control elections. They have shown no purposeful intention of digging below the surface, where they would have to deal with large blocs of voters whose names identify their ancestry with one or another of the more recent waves of immigration from Europe. Congroups are exploited by political machines whose centrated in single wards or larger districts, these corrupt influence infects city, state and national politics. The "melting pot" has produced a brew which the economic and religious forces which encouraged unlimited immigration did not anticipate.

Chicago Wakes Up!

The Book of the Month

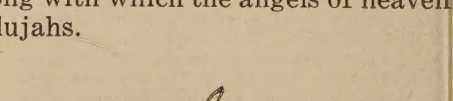
A CATHOLIC SPEAKS HIS MIND, *by Thomas Sugrue. Harper, $1.00.*

THIS is an important little book which should be read as an evidence of discontent among the Roman Catholic laity. The author vigorously opposes the claim of his church to be a state. He identifies with this claim the whole range of political and "social" activity in which the church has engaged throughout all the centuries. He sees a distinct conflict between churchly allegiance and American patriotism. An ambassadorship at the Vatican is condemned with as cogent a group of arguments as have been formulated by any Protestant or other opponent of this un-American proposal. He castigates the church for its sectarianism which refuses to cooperate with other churches and for its loud acclaim of a prominent convert, while ignoring the "heavy leakage" in its own membership. He maintains his loyalty to the church, but holds that it should be the "totalitarian ruler" of the inner life of its members, not of their outer life. Here he must be read with discrimination. He seems not to be aware that it is the power of the church over the "inner life" by its monopolistic control of divine grace that is the source of the church's power over the "outer life." The reform Mr. Sugrue proposes, and to which he calls all Protestants as well as Catholics, consists of a withdrawal into a mystical form of religion where all differences disappear. He speaks of this as if it were an original and untried idea. If the reader takes this with critical care, he will find the rest of the book informative and probably highly significant as the voice of more than one Catholic layman.

A Thought for the Month

LONG SINCE have I ceased to be troubled about the physical details of the Resurrection. The accounts as given in the Gospels are not too easily reconciled. But we can say with absolute assurance that, but for the Resurrection, there would have been no Christianity. The disciples would have gone back to their old vocations as fishermen and tax gatherers. They would have cherished in disillusionment the memory of their companionship with Jesus as if it had been a dream, beautiful, but only a dream. Jesus himself, his words, his deeds, his death, would have passed into oblivion—the world and we would never have heard of him. But the Resurrection was a window through which the disciples looked back on all that they had experienced, and they saw everything in a new dimension. They looked upon it, now, from the divine side, the heavenly side. With inspired imagination they saw that what had occurred in their two or three years with Jesus was but the focus on this little spot of earth of the cosmic drama whose stage was heaven itself. What Jesus said and did in their presence was what God is eternally saying to us and doing for us. And his death on the cross became the measure of God's own forgiving and saving love. It was through the window of the Resurrection that the disciples saw all this. Fifty days were to pass before they could gather their ecstasy into communicable words. But at Pentecost it burst forth in a proclamation that has now been heard around the world. Little wonder that Christian faith perennially celebrates the glory of that Easter morning in a song with which the angels of heaven join their hallelujahs.

Through the Window of The Resurrection



For the Record—

HOW much time do present day ministers devote to reading? This question was prompted by the statement of a fellow clergyman recently as we browsed through a book display at a church conference. "This reminds me of the days when I *used* to read," he said. Is this statement indicative of the reading habits of clergymen?

We think not. Our observations lead us to believe that while some pastors are being victimized by the impact of modern mass communications media—picture magazines, radio, TV—a great many more are continuing solid reading habits. The reports from our editorial associates and book reviewers on "Books Preachers Are Reading" indicate that reading is not a dead art among the clergy.

But we are under no illusion about how difficult it is for ministers to maintain an adequate reading schedule these days. As the church's activities have expanded from a once-a-week service to a seven-day-a-week program, administrative details have multiplied accordingly. Too many ministers are carrying more of these administrative burdens than they should. If ministers are to avoid the pitfalls of a ministry devoted primarily to "serving tables" they must discover early how to draw the line between their duties as physicians of the soul and administers of complicated church machinery. This calls for the enlisting and training of the church's most capable lay leadership which is a part of the genius of Protestantism.

In our December issue, Keneth S. Jones reported the results of a Yale Divinity School survey on the work habits of 300 successful ministers which showed that these clergymen spent a weekly average of 12 hours in sermon preparation and an additional 9 hours in "reading for growth." Preachers should ponder that portion of the study which showed a clear correlation between the hours spent on sermon preparation and the congregation's percentage of average attendance. The conclusion seems clear: pastors endanger their effectiveness as spiritual leaders when they cease reading.

Among the deep rewards which come to the editors of the Pulpit are the verbals and written reports from hundreds of ministers located literally around the world who testify to the place this journal fills in their reading plans for mental and spiritual nourishment. A new slant on Biblical texts, suggestive sermon ideas and outlines geared to the needs of our time, articles on the minister's life and work, new prayers, hymns, litanies and poetry; reviews of helpful new books and the stimulating editor's page all go to earn their place in the reading schedule of an increasing number of today's ministers.

A. M. M.

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A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE EDITOR'S PAGE 30

SERMONS

Jesus Took a Towel, by Liston Pope 4
The Resurrection Truth, by George McNeill Ray 6
The Christ—The Son of the Living God, by S. MacLean Gilmour 7
The Tradition of the Fathers, by Charles P. Bowles 10
Dangers of Socialism, by Harry Milton Taylor 13

ARTICLES

Preaching and Christian Stewardship, by John E. Simpson .. 2
The Lost Art of Winning Souls, by Aaron N. Meckel 19

FEATURES

Enslin 22
Emurian 26
Seidenspinner 28
Books 29
Children's Sermon 16
Hymns for Today 20, 25
Pulpit Calendar 24
Pulpit Paragraphs 24
Pulpit Post 17
Pulpit Prayer 12
Sermon Summary 23
Titles and Texts 9
For the Record 31

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